

JOHNSON'S CROSSING: AN INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS  
OF A RURAL BLACK COMMUNITY

BY

WILLIAM J. SIMMONS

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate  
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By

William J. Simmons

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Chairman: Joseph S. Vandiver, Ph.D.  
Major Department: Sociology

Johnson's Crossing, a small Black settlement in North-east Florida, has survived as a community in spite of minimal development on the basic institutions that are inclusive in the concept "community." This research, in part, was undertaken to determine the impact of those institutions upon the lives of the residents of Johnson's Crossing.

The four stated goals of the research were (1) to provide a descriptive account of the life style and condition of people in a rural Black community, (2) to show the elements that bind the population into a sense of community, (3) to determine the "coping" mechanisms employed by the residents in order to exist in such a setting, and (4) to reveal the attitude of the residents toward desegregation of the schools and discrimination in employment within the county and surrounding areas.

The methods employed to obtain the data were participant observation, the questionnaire, the key informant, and use of secondary sources such as the public library. When the situation did not lend itself to structure, the unstructured interview technique was used.

The findings showed that there were two major institutions interacting upon the residents, thus allowing them to identify as a community. These institutions, the family and the church, have been strong forces in the area since 1862 but at this writing show signs of weakening.

Although residents of Johnson's Crossing did not perceive political and educational changes as reflecting marked progress in race relations, or indeed, as having affected their routine of living very much, they did not seem generally to be particularly angry or militant.

Much of Black America lives under conditions very different from the inner cities of metropolitan centers. Contemporary research on the variety of Black communities is needed; this research on one such community represents a modest start in meeting this need.



## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This research describes the way of life of Black Americans who live in a rural area of Northeast Florida. It is an account of a specific Black community and will act, it is hoped, as a catalyst to others in the field of community research.

As a prelude to presenting a rural community study, credit should be given to two early exponents of rural sociology. They are Liberty Hyde Bailey and Kenyon Leach Butterfield, both graduates of the Michigan Agricultural College (now Michigan State University). Neither was a sociologist in the traditional sense but the role played by them in the emergence of rural studies did much to prepare the way for this new area of research.

Bailey, in the early 1900's, was the most widely known figure in the area of agriculture. His standing as the most prolific agricultural writer of his time gave rise to his reputation. Throughout his lifetime, he idealized the farm and the farmer. He felt that "effectively" educated men and women should be the ones placed in the open country, as an initial step. Needed were farmers who knew about the land and wanted to develop it to its maximum. This, Bailey believed, would solve all of the other problems of farm life.

Bailey advocated teaching agriculture in the public schools as a regular part of the curriculum and believed that the curriculum should be based on the life experiences of the student. His thinking had reference to the simple country school and his writings helped to set ideals for the development of rural social life.

Whereas Bailey is referred to as a herald of sociology (Nelson, 1969, p. 18), Kenyon Butterfield took a more professional approach to the field of rural sociology. He received a master's degree at the University of Michigan in 1902, and became an instructor of rural sociology in 1903, the first man to hold such a position.

Butterfield authored four books of which Chapters in Rural Progress, published in 1908, is considered the most important. In Chapters in Rural Progress, he attempted to define the "rural problem." He was convinced that whereas the problem of cities was congestion, the problem of rural areas was one of isolation. He insisted that farmers were "middle class" and that "class" isolation was part of the rural problem. He stressed the need for education, organization and better communication among farm people.

As president of Massachusetts Agricultural College (1906-24), he urged colleges to introduce courses in rural sociology and agricultural economics. He further advocated training in sociology for clergymen, and suggested that rural sociology be required in teacher's colleges. As an administrator, he used his position to insure the teaching of rural

sociology courses at his school. In 1912, for the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences (March 1912), he wrote an article on the subject of rural sociology as a college discipline. His courses represented a serious attempt to describe aspects of rural life, which students today will regard as proper subject matter.

Interestingly enough, in spite of the influence of two great men such as Bailey and Butterfield, few administrators of agricultural colleges followed their suggestions. It was the teacher's colleges that first introduced curricula in rural sociology. It was only after the introduction of other social areas that rural sociology developed as a college discipline.

### Rural Black Studies

Studies of the life styles and conditions of rural Black Americans have been relatively few. In a sense, W. E. B. DuBois' classic early work, Souls of Black Folk (1903), represented the initial sociological response to Black life conditions in the rural South following the end of the slave era. To DuBois, a native of New England and a graduate of Harvard University, the conditions of life endured by most Black people in rural Georgia during the closing days of the last century had the impact of severe cultural shock. His description represented jointly an effort to transcribe what he had observed and a protest of conditions of human deprivation.

Despite the eloquence of his writing and the personal attention which this book brought to the young scholar, DuBois' account was not followed by similar analyses--or protests--by sociologists. Not until 1930 did systematic field studies of Black people in the rural South get underway. These studies will be summarized in Chapter II. As will become evident in that chapter, little research centering on rural Black communities has been conducted since the school desegregation decision of 1954. The results of that decision, the influence of the changes which grew out of the Civil Rights Movement of the late 1950's and early 1960's, the impact of more recent Affirmative Action governmental procedure, and the beginning of return migration of Blacks to many areas of the South--all of these and many other factors have perhaps changed the Black situation in Southern rural communities. It is anticipated that increased national interest will become manifested concerning the structures of predominantly Black communities and the impact of desegregation. It is hoped that this report will enhance the study of such rural complexes.

### Johnson's Crossing

Johnson's Crossing is located in western Putnam County, twenty-four miles east of Gainesville, Florida. It is a junction where a major highway, SR 20 from Hawthorne,

intersects with a secondary road, SR C21 from Johnson. Thus, this area is identified as Johnson's Crossing (figure 1).

This community was first settled during the 1860's by White slaveholders and a number of slaves from the area of Palatka, the only city of consequence in Putnam County. Johnson's Crossing is unincorporated and is predominantly Black, containing only a few White families. For purposes of this research, White families play no significant role. Therefore, references concerning the residents will include only the Black population.

The geographical boundaries of the community of Johnson's Crossing are Cowpens Lake Road, extending east for one and one-half miles to Magnolia Baptist Church; North on Cowpens Lake Road for one-half mile and South on Cowpens Lake Road to the Oak Grove area; North on SR C21 for one mile and South on C21 for one mile. This area encloses the populace designated as residents of Johnson's Crossing. The residents, by local consensus and self-reporting, know the boundaries of the community. Therefore, there is no misunderstanding by the local people where Johnson's Crossing begins and ends.

Putnam County has no official accounting of the population of the community. Therefore, county voting records were examined to approximate the number of persons in the area. These figures proved to be unreliable and could not be used. On the official county map, the area is listed as Whitesville, and Johnson's Crossing is not shown as a separate community. The sub-communities of Monroe Town and Oak Grove, in addition

to Johnson's Crossing, are all listed as Whitesville. The county voting records show this community to be part of two voting districts, 17 and 18. In these districts there were listed 710 registered Democrats and two (2) Independents. Because the official tally of residents did not correlate with the resident's figures, the decision was made to survey each household in the designated community.

With the aid of the director of the Westside Community Action Center, a survey form was put together. Included were data that could be used for community agency reports, as well as questionnaire and census information. Seven young adults, trained by the researcher, as well as the director of the center, joined the researcher in a door-to-door canvass of the designated community. The results of this census will be seen in a later chapter.

### Goals of this Study

This research was conducted with four goals in mind. The first was to provide a descriptive account of the life style and condition of people in a rural Black community. Historically, all-Black communities in the United States have received little attention from scholars, with the exception of Charles S. Johnson (1934, 1941), Charles S. Johnson, Edwin R. Embree and Will W. Alexander (1935), Carter G. Woodson (1930), and E. Franklin Frazier (1948). Even then, Frazier actually concentrated on "communities of mixed blood." Other scholars



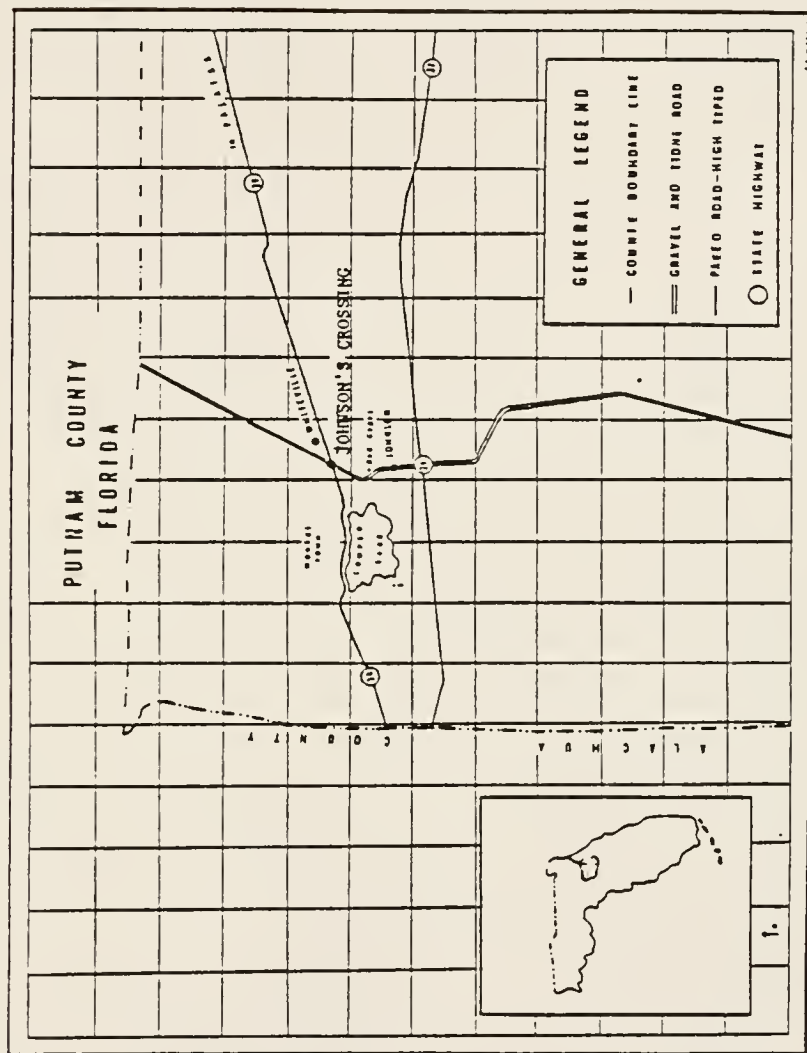


Figure 1. Map of Johnson and Surrounding Area

studied Blacks in urban areas or small towns. Since the rural areas, with their own unique problems, have received little attention, one of the purposes of this research was to understand one Black community and its role in American society.

The second goal was to show the elements that bind the population into a sense of community in spite of the minimal development of the basic institutions in the community. According to Warren (1963), a community exists when five major elements are present: (1) production-distribution--and consumption (economics), (2) socialization (education), (3) social control (politics), (4) social participation (religion), and (5) mutual support (family). These institutions, interacting with each other in some combination, must be present in the concept of community. This research reveals the institutions that are present and the effect or lack of effect on the inhabitants of Johnson's Crossing.

There are "coping mechanisms" that are employed by the residents of Johnson's Crossing which help them function in an area of Putnam County which has historically been neglected by social and community services. The third goal was to describe these mechanisms and their use by the local inhabitants.

Finally, this research reveals attitudes of Black people on the effects of desegregation of the school and discrimination in employment in the county. Traditionally, the school was the center of cultural activity for the Black community.



A Black education major knew that upon graduation, if nothing else was found, he/she always could teach. Desegregation changed all that, and the attitudes of the parents toward the White teacher who now had the responsibility for educating the child are revealed. Attitudes toward county-wide employment and job discrimination are also an area of focus, due to the possible exclusion of Blacks even from service and menial labor jobs as well as from jobs in the professions.

To rephrase the goals of the research as succinctly as possible, it is a study of the present pattern of living in a rural Black community, with particular focus on four broad themes: (1) institutional and other sources of whatever local identity is found to characterize the residents, (2) the effects of the basic institutions upon the residents, (3) the methods of "coping" with a lack of services, and (4) the impact on the local residents of work and schooling outside the community and of recent changes affecting the status of American Black people.

## CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this review of the literature pertaining to the rural Black community, research studies made before the 1954 Supreme Court decision on school integration are termed early rural studies and those made in the period following are termed contemporary studies. This is done in an effort to determine if any changes have occurred in the conditions and/or lifestyles of rural Blacks or if these have remained essentially the same.

### Early Rural Black Studies

Carter G. Woodson conducted a study for the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History entitled The Rural Negro (1930). His basic concern was the plight of the 60 percent of Black Americans who then lived in the rural areas of the South. He began the study with the premise that the Blacks in this country want justice, something that seemed unattainable until White people knew more about them and the conditions under which they live. In his book he made a scientific study of rural Blacks, giving details of how they earned a living, and of the conditions, favorable or unfavorable, under which it was earned. The study dealt with the problems

of tenancy, the evils of the peonage system, and Blacks in industry. Woodson describes as "pitiful" the poor food and wretched living conditions of the people. Blacks were subject to many serious diseases. In a comparison with Whites who lived in the same area, it was found that Blacks had a much higher mortality rate. Woodson found that the majority of Blacks lived on small farms, yet only one-fifth of these were owned by them. The rest of the acreage they tilled as "croppers," share tenants, or on some other tenancy basis. Woodson concluded that tenancy was the cause of most of the other evils of the South. Woodson also looked at the recreational and religious life of the Blacks. He surmises that all of the problems of Black people could not be blamed on the landowners. He delineated the shortcomings in the religious experience of the people. Part of the problem, he admitted, was the failure of the church to recognize the changing times and to become an influence on the younger people. In expressing the efforts and obstacles of Black people as they struggled to advance, Mr. Woodson could think of no better word than "discouraging."

Charles S. Johnson, Edwin R. Embree, and Will W. Alexander conducted a study during the era of the New Deal. This research, The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy (1935), was a study of the cotton culture as practiced in five of the "Old South" states: Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina. There was a serious attempt on the part of the research team to number and classify tenant families in

the cotton belt. They noted that there were many misconceptions by people when they viewed the tenant situation as it involved Blacks. Most people assumed that the majority of tenants were Black. In fact, the numbers of sharecroppers in Georgia alone were 65,104 Black and 81,753 White. Rupert Vance, who collaborated in this study, placed the number of tenant families in the cotton belt at 1,790,873. Of this number 1,091,944 were White and 688,839 were Black. They found that White family units were larger than Black family units because of the high mortality rates among Blacks and also black family breakups. A historical check revealed that after slavery, White families began to compete with Blacks for this new kind of tenancy. From 1920-30, the White tenant farmers increased by 200,000 while the Blacks experienced a decrease of 2,000.

The report dealt with the classes of tenants, of which three were delineated: (1) renters who used land for a fixed rental to be paid in cash or in equivalent crop values, (2) share tenants who furnish their own farm equipment and animals and agree to pay a fixed percentage of crops they raise, and (3) share croppers who have everything furnished from them and who pay a larger share of the profits. In most situations of tenancy, the landowners kept the books and rarely did the tenant come out ahead. It was estimated in 1933 that 43.4 percent of the farmers were averaging \$80.00 in debt before they planted their 1934 crop.

The conclusion of this report was that the old plantation type of farm organization, the pattern in which only one crop is planted, the system of tenure, of finance and production, belonged to an unreclaimable past. These practices had to be changed entirely if the best interests of the area and the system itself were to escape collapse. There had to be a reorganization of farming in the Old South.

Unlike Johnson et al., Arthur F. Raper conducted a study in a specific area of the south. His research, Preface to Peasantry: A Tale of Two Black Counties (1936), focused on two Georgia counties, Macon and Greene. These counties he felt, were essentially representative of all the counties along the Black-belt which stretched from Virginia to Texas. Greene county, which had been devastated by the boll weevil during the early twenties, was representative of the older counties lying near the eastern coast. Macon county began to be tilled when the soil in the east began to fail. Having suffered very little from boll weevil damage, Macon county began to reach its peak in the mid-twenties.

The author, having studied for extensive periods of time in both counties, provides charts, tables and photographs which leave little doubt in anyone's mind of the thoroughness involved in the study. From the data gathered, he concludes that the collapse of the plantation economy is a "preface to peasantry."

A summary of this book could be reduced to this: The plantation system, whether evolving or declining, is the exploiter of land and labor. It reduces the masses of people, Black and White, to poverty, keeps them in ignorance, and destroys for them the slightest dream of a brighter future. The system ultimately drives the more aggressive wage earner away from the soil. The families that remain are usually unaccustomed to community leadership and responsibility. They tend to become small owners and renters, and develop low standards of living. The result is the emergence of a permanent peasant class.

Charles S. Johnson's Growing up in the Black Belt: Negro Youth in the South (1941), was one of several studies on the same theme. It is a study of the social growth and development of Black youth in eight counties of the Black belt, and the story is told by the youth themselves. More than 2,000 Black youngsters were studied. Their ages ranged from 12 to 19 and they were representatives of the rural Black population of the South. The youth were subjected to a series of six tests, five of which were devised especially for the study. A smaller number of these were selected for intensive interview.

Dr. Johnson found that in the lower classes, the problems were those related to poverty, economic deprivation, poor living conditions and very unstable family organization. Upper-class youngsters, he found, who were free of family and



economic difficulties, were more conscious of the difficulties concerning race relations, education, marriage, and of social relations within the Black group.

The study found that the schools that were provided for the education of Black youth were inferior and grossly inadequate. The pains of harsh reality were eased somewhat due to the belief that education was truly the means to social prestige and economic escape.

Dr. Johnson, like Woodson (1930), found that these young people did not need the church and religion as much as their parents. The churches were not responsive to the changing times and therefore could not meet the needs of a less docile, more mobile Black population. Facilities for recreation were few and, in most areas, inadequate. The youth usually frequented questionable establishments for amusement. The young people developed a more strict moral code toward sex than their parents and tended more toward a stable family life. They did not necessarily want to identify with Black groups or ethnicities. To them, Black or White complexions were less desirable than brown or tan.

In Shadow of the Plantation (1934), Johnson conducted a study in Macon County, Alabama. The area studied contained 612 Black families. The study gives historical background showing remnants of slavery. The researcher gives an in-depth analysis of family structure, morals, education, religion, and labor conditions in the area. Although the community is

less than ten miles from Tuskegee and its college, it did not benefit from the educational opportunities available. This study shows that since the Civil War, there had been very little change in farming methods. Black families made use of the same simple tools to grow cotton as were used when slavery existed in the county. Because most of them knew little else, they still tried to make a living on depleted soil.

Blacks usually moved from farm to farm but almost always within the county. Whereas under slavery the master was looked upon for guidance and financial backing, the landlord had assumed that position. Johnson observed that the usual custom of marriage and divorce that applied to White citizens was not the same among the Blacks. There was no stigma attached to unions without legal sanction or to illegitimacy of offspring. A legal marriage could be terminated by simply writing "a strip of paper."

The diet of the people seemed more limited than when slavery existed. Most subsisted on a diet of salt pork, corn or flour bread, and sorghum molasses. Few vegetables were included in the meals. Milk was scarce and "greens" were considered harmful. As one would expect, the mortality rate was very high. As sharecroppers, tenants, or field hands, these people had to work hard. Women and children were expected to work just as hard as the men. Because of the economic system, these people were in a rut and Johnson saw no future for them.



Two significant studies were conducted during the decade of the thirties. Although not primarily centering on all-Black communities, they nevertheless had impact for rural research investigators.

John Dollard's Caste and Class in a Southern Town (1937) is a study which gives insight into the relations between Black and White groups. The community is called Southerntown in the book, but is in reality Indianola, Mississippi. The material is the results of five months of residence in the town. The author collected life histories of Blacks, held interviews with both Blacks and Whites, and conducted personal observations of their behavior. First, the author describes the relationship between the caste levels of the two castes. Then he discusses the gains of the White middle class regarding economic advantages, sex relations, and prestige. This, as well as caste patterning in religion, politics and education, is given as the background for explaining the attitudes of Blacks. An attempt was made at explaining the aggression of Blacks against Blacks, Blacks against Whites, and Whites against Blacks, as well as the defensive beliefs of the White caste. As the author states, "the aim of this study is to group and describe the emotional structure which runs parallel to the formal structure in the community" (Dollard, 1937, p. 16).

Using a different conceptual approach, Hortense Powdermaker in After Freedom: A Cultural Study in the Deep South

(1939) used techniques of the cultural anthropologist to analyze the same community, Indianola, Mississippi.

"Cottonville," the name given to the town in her study, had about 3000 people with an almost equal population of Blacks and Whites. The people of this town adapted themselves as best as they could to the hardships of life imposed by the factor of group relationships based on inequality in power, social position and privilege.

Miss Powdermaker first shows the modes of life and discusses the attitudes of the dominant Whites. She reveals how the point of view of the Whites, operating through their preferred legal, economic, and social position, checks and irritates the Blacks. She also shows how violence, due partly to repression, erupts in the Black community itself. Lynching proved to be the common denominator that reduced the threat of overt action by the Blacks against Whites. The author sets forth details of Black life in the town and on the plantation. Details on the nature of the Black family in Cottonville, the forces that made for its creation, its relative ease of disintegration and the position that children held within it are all revealed.

Miss Powdermaker discusses the forms of Black religion and the manner in which the more fervent forms of Black worship are matched by the practices of certain White groups. Like Johnson (1941), the author discusses education and its place in the life and aspirations of the people. The book ends

with a formal statement about Black attitudes toward Whites and a description of the processes of change which were so important in determining the future of both Blacks and Whites.

A study was conducted in Natchez, Mississippi, a city at that time of some 10,000 people, of whom 50 percent were Black. The study, Deep South (1941), dealt with the relationships between people in the city and the surrounding rural population (three-fourth of whom were Black). The researchers, Allison Davis and Burleigh Gardner, used the Yankee City class scheme that was devised by W. Lloyd Warner in that famous New England study. Some of the researchers had assisted in the Yankee City project and were well equipped to employ this anthropological approach. The investigations were carried out by two married couples, one Black and the other White, who lived in the area for two years. This period of time made possible the establishment of rapport and community identity, enough so that caste and class characteristics could be easily distinguishable by the investigators. The factual data presented are considered by some critics to be unrivaled in their completeness and scientific objectivity.

A research study undertaken by Morton Rubin attempted to look at life in the Black belt area of Alabama. This study, Plantation County (1951), tried to answer the questions of (1) what is distinctive about life in the plantation area when compared to the rest of the United States; (2) what are the characteristics of the plantation area person; (3) what

are the dynamic forces operating in the plantation area today as compared to earlier years; and (4) what effect has the changing social structure had on the population of the plantation area.

The author made extensive comparisons and contrasts between the Black community and the White community. Although the study was not directed exclusively toward Black lifestyles, it was complete enough to give a basic understanding of conditions affecting Blacks in plantation communities.

The study dealt with problems of the changing economic conditions which were causing the Blacks to emigrate from the area, but it also addressed the forces which tended to bring the people back. The stratification system which Rubin termed "race-caste" was given much attention in chapters seven and eight. He found that the older Blacks were so acculturated with the idea that Whites were superior, that they resented the younger Blacks for discussing anything different. However, with the coming of the Farmers Home Administration and small factories, the Blacks were beginning to see that there existed other channels for improving themselves than cropping or serving as domestics. They began to develop an independence from the controllers of the power structure on the farms. This was causing confusion by both Blacks and Whites. Rubin says that forces have been created which cause the new patterns to be dysfunctional and inconsistent with the old ones. He says "old ways are being

defined but compromise is slow. The young people of the plantation area will have to examine the old ways and the new ways with clear and analytic minds in order to discover that goal of a good life they want and desire" (p. 205).

Throughout most of these studies there is a common theme, the prevalence of poverty. It is understandable that poor rural Blacks suffered many hardships, but so did most of the country during this decade of the thirties. However, what the various authors were able to reveal was the fact that many of the Blacks saw no hope, no future for themselves under the existing socio-political systems. A vestige of the slave system, the "separate but equal" doctrine, was still prevalent in much of the South. It was felt by Blacks that with time and education, as inadequate as it was, things would get better. Blacks felt that if the political structure would allow equal access and opportunity into the education and economic institutions, the shackles of poverty and ignorance would be loosened.

World War II altered the economic status for a great number of rural Black Americans by allowing them to fill vacancies that were created by men who went to war. The migration from the rural South which had been triggered during the first World War became greatly accelerated. Many Blacks moved to urban areas in the northern and central states where there was shortage of manpower. The chance to climb the economic ladder was afforded them.

After the War, the barriers to education began falling. In the year 1950, the Supreme Court decided that Marion Sweatt, a law student in Texas, and George McLaurin, a graduate student in Oklahoma, must be accepted in the major state university approximate to their needs for study, and once there, must be treated in the same manner as any other student. In 1954, a different Supreme Court decided in its Brown v. The Board of Education decision that "separate but equal" could not exist and the barriers to education must come down. In the decade which followed, the Civil Rights Movement successfully attacked many other barriers which had confronted Blacks. Did the removal of these obstacles change dramatically the plight of Blacks in the rural areas? An attempt will be made in the next section to deal with the issue.

### Contemporary Studies

Hylan G. Lewis conducted a study, Blackways of Kent (1955) in York, South Carolina, a small industrial town. Kent was the invented name for this community of about 4,000 people. Lewis lived in the Black section of the community while making his observations. There, he did not find the bitterness over frustrations that seemed to characterize other similar communities. Instead, he found a proud, dignified people, able to adjust to life's harsh conditions.



In this community there were those who were "respectable" and others were were "non-respectables." The respectables were the ones who tried to assimilate the values and cultural standards of the dominant White population.

When writing, the author uses the colorful common language of the people, yet does it in such a manner as not be offensive to the population studied. For example, he uses the term "nigger," but when he does, it gives more reality to the story.

Members of this community were preoccupied with ideas of sex and drinking just as had been found in other communities. Also like other communities, they were concerned about every problem of the economy, their personal appearance, and a host of other basic issues. It would not be uncommon to hear at the local recreation spot, conversation with themes like hard times, "rocking" (receiving unemployment compensation), hitting the number, the range and effectiveness of different types of guns, whether certain individuals would prefer to use a gun rather than a knife during a fight, "run-ins" with the police, Blacks who "run to the man with everything they know," and whether wives and sweethearts were playing around.

Lewis says that residents believed that in spite of all of the problems of the community, from job shortage to poor educational facilities, Kent was a "good" and, in some ways, superior place to live.

Lewis also wrote an article, "Innovations and Trends in the Contemporary Southern Negro Community" (1954), in which he looked at both rural and urban Blacks. He found variations in the content and quality of southern Blacks to be associated with subregions, urban and rural residence, and socioeconomic levels. He says that both Blacks and Whites were greatly aware of and largely accepted the ecological, industrial, demographic, and economic changes that were occurring. Lewis says that changes in the rural Black culture were due chiefly to the immediate pressures and leadership for change, originating in or channeled through urban southern Blacks. The observation is made that more impersonal relationships were developing between Blacks and Whites in the distribution of public services and rewards.

The author observed that urban residence for Blacks in the South automatically increased their status and power, although spatial and social distances between the recently arrived and upwardly mobile urban Black and the so-called lower class Blacks were probably growing wider. The rural Black was increasingly finding that he could benefit economically by migrating to the urban areas. With time, the new, increasingly urban, Southern Black community was becoming more like the Northern urban Black community of a generation or so earlier.

William E. Bittle and Gilbert E. Geis conducted a research work titled "Racial Self-Fulfillment and the Rise of



an All-Negro Community in Oklahoma" (1957). The community was the once famous Black town, Boley, Oklahoma. The research was designed to show the uniqueness of Negroes in areas where there was no superordinate group to be faced daily. Contrary to belief that studies in urban areas have tended to show the "real" Black personality, this study reveals a different outlook. These kinds of communities permit a multidirectional development of behavioral forms, and only certain aspects are patterned after the White culture of the area. The research shows that Blacks, left alone, will develop the same democratic ideals of the dominant society. The research suggests that it was White hostility that limited the growth of the town and after a long struggle, the residents lost their desire to expand.

George Mitchell's I'm Somebody Important: Young Black Voices from Rural Georgia (1971), notes that lifestyles of rural Blacks are still being ignored. This, he suggests is partly because the rural Black poses little threat to White America. To reveal the thinking of some young Blacks from the rural South, the author interviewed six youngsters between 14-20 years of age. In their own words they describe their aspirations, frustrations, loves, hates, opinions, and uncertainties. Concern of the problems of racism and poverty are usually focused on the urban ghetto which leads one to suspect that society is only aroused when it is threatened. These Black youngsters, being typical of poor rural Blacks

in the South, represent no threat, but their voices need to be heard in order for America to understand them as human beings with unique kinds of problems.

Mitchell says he wrote the book in recognition of James Wall's observation, "The acceptance--assumed acceptance, not just reasoned acceptance--of Blacks as human beings is essential to the overcoming of a national racism that functions primarily because Whites have managed to deny the humanity of invisible Blacks in their midst" (Mitchell, 1971, p. 3).

The author chose Georgia's poverty-stricken Lower Chattahoochee Valley in order to write his book. The subjects live in or near four small towns with an average population of about 2,000. This area is recognized as one of the most poverty-stricken regions in the county. The nearest major city is Columbus and the subjects live thirty-five to eighty-five miles away. There are few industries in the valley and very few families make their living by farming. The major contributors to the economy are peanuts and pulpwood.

The young people in the book were paid two dollars an hour for the interviews (much more than the parents made), and were told that they would share in the royalties after initial expenses were deducted. Having been told that they would be writing a book about themselves gave them a feeling that they were important to the country. They willingly discussed their lives with the author in their homes, their recreation spots and their favorite "hang-outs." Mitchell uses pictures throughout the book to show the harsh reality

of rural poverty. He makes, however, no summary or conclusion at the end. He leaves this to the reader's judgments.

"Black Political Control in Greene County Alabama" (1976), was researched by David Coombs, M. H. Alsikafi, et al. It is a two-dimensional research design which involves a comparison of Greene County, which has an all Black government body, with two other counties that do not have Black political control. The report compares socio-economic data of the state of Alabama in 1970 with the data for the three counties. It also compares nonagricultural wage and salary employment data for 1969-70 and 1973-74, as well as Federal grant monies received in dollars from 1970-75.

The results of this report show that once the government became Black controlled, there was (1) more rapid expansion of government employment in Greene County as compared to the others; (2) a greater flow of external and private funding for Greene County; (3) great improvement in the level of living for Blacks in Greene County; and (4) more accommodating agreements by both Black and White leaders in a variety of relationships.

The indication is that the Federal government was willing to pour vast amounts of capital into this region due to the social and political climate of the time. How long this will continue remains to be seen. It also indicates that, like the Oklahoma experiments, Blacks are still seeking that

"Utopia" of self government and are able to make accomplishments if given the chance.

The theme of economic deprivation can still be seen in the few writings of contemporary authors of rural Black studies. However, little mention is made of education problems or concerns. Although these studies may not provide an adequate basis to judge, it could be that many rural Blacks do not view education as a key issue as once was the case or perhaps the educational systems have become better for them. The answers cannot be discovered here, but further studies on rural Blacks might give insight into the problem of rural education.

### CHAPTER III COMMUNITY ESTABLISHMENTS

When one arrives in the community called Johnson's Crossing, nothing out of the ordinary strikes the eye. Noticeable might be a few homes along the highway and a sign pointing the way to the town of Johnson. However, at the intersection of Highways 20 and C21, there is a huge tree where people gather almost daily. Across the street is a store that sells wine and beer. The men usually wander to and from these two landmarks, the "tree" and Jackie's Liquors. These are but two of the areas selected as observation points by the researcher. Each of six areas of observation will be discussed in this section.

#### The Westside Community Center

The Westside Community Center is located one-quarter mile from the Johnson's intersection on Highway C21. It is a part of what once was Oak Grove Elementary School, the newest section housing the center. At the time of the researcher's initial visit, the center had a director and three other staff members. They were responsible for the areas including Johnson, Johnson's Crossing, Whitesville, Monroetown,

McMeehin, Florahome, and parts of Melrose. The home office for the county program was in Palatka.

The activities of the center varied daily. The schedule of activities was:

Monday	- Willing Workers Sewing Circle
Tuesday	- Retired Citizens Open Sessions - Called Meetings
Wednesday	- Senior Citizens Volunteer Program
Thursday	- Voters League Meeting
Friday	- Special called meetings of the Community

In addition to this schedule, local meetings that were not scheduled in the churches were held in the center. Outside, when weather permitted, young men would be playing on the only basketball court found in the community.

At the far end of the building, classrooms were set up for "Operation Headstart." While not under supervision of the center itself, the program nevertheless complemented the center's activities. Here will be found the young people who will perhaps follow the example of the older adults and remain as part of the community.

The Headstart program had enrolled approximately 40 students and two teachers, both of whom were from other communities. Ordinarily, one would expect the children of rural families to be the typical stereotype--overalls, boots, ill-fitting cotton dresses, etc. These children did not reflect this. On the many occasions they were observed, they



were always neat in appearance and well-groomed. It seemed that the parents took great pride in preparing their children each day. If this was typical of all Headstart programs, then, at least this could be considered as a positive accomplishment.

The teachers apparently were having an impact upon the manners of their charges. When the children would enter the building, they all spoke to the researcher and used the title "sir." Typical was "good morning, sir" or "good afternoon, sir." The researcher reflected that this is a rarity anywhere today.

The children were fed hot meals at the school each day, prepared by some of the "best" cooks in the county. The cafeteria was located between the Headstart classrooms and the center office. On numerous occasions the researcher, while sitting in the director's office, developed a sudden hunger and would have to visit the kitchen.

During the year, the Community Center was the hub for any kind of activity that needed to be held by the residents of Johnson's Crossing. Novice political groups such as the Senior Citizens and the Voters League would meet there as the occasion dictated. The researcher was present on two occasions when county officials were brought in to address the residents on social services available to the community. It seemed that only the older residents were interested in these talks. Very few young adults were there. Efforts were

being made by the center director and community leaders to interest the young adults in the activities of their community, both political and social.

### The Churches and Leadership

Throughout the history of the Black man in America, the church has played a vital role in his socialization process. The American Christian religion is a "creation" of White society, and has been promulgated to the advantage of that society while at the same time serving as an invisible partner in the inhumane treatment of Blacks in this country. However, it was the White man who taught the Christian religion to the Black Christian leaders. Biased as it was, a few learned men came out of this experience. During the era of slavery, many Black freedmen or freemen used their knowledge of the Christian religion to strike hard at the shackles of slavery. Nathaniel Paul was one of those preachers. In a speech delivered in 1827, he said, "slavery is so contrary to the laws which the God of nature has laid down as the rule of action by which the conduct of man is to be regulated towards his fellow man, which binds him to love his neighbor as himself, that it ever has, and ever will meet the decided disapprobation of heaven" (Woodson, 1925, p. 65).

It was the Christian church which led the way for followers of the "underground railroad" during many escape



attempts by slaves from the South. Religious men, Quakers in particular, raised their voices against slavery as contrary to God's laws. As the Methodists and Baptists began to add to this increasing chant for manumission, the stage was set for more protests by free Black religious leaders.

Abolitionists were pressing the issue of freedom for the slaves in this country and advocating this freedom from the many pulpits. Abolitionist leaders were slow, however, to accept the Black Churchmen. In 1836 Abolitionists voted down a move to have a Black minister preach to them. In 1844, the Methodists, at the time representing one body, split into two separate organizations when Northern Church leaders declared that a bishop could not own slaves.

#### Political Activitism Following the Civil War

The Black preacher played an important role in politics immediately following the Civil War. In the area of politics there were more ministers and artisans involved than in some other social institutions affecting the lives of Blacks. Twenty-two Blacks served in the Congress from 1870 to 1901, and of them, six were lawyers, and three were preachers. The others were skilled men in other trades and businesses.

Relying on his church as his political base, the preacher was quite active in constitutional conventions and in elective offices. The Reverend Jesse F. Boulder of Mississippi helped to manage the campaigns of Hiram R. Revels and Blanche K.

Bruce, both elected to the United States Senate. Reverend Boulder later served for a while as a member of the Mississippi legislature.

In 1879, Reverend James Lynch, a Methodist minister, was elected Secretary of State in Mississippi. Reverend Christopher H. Payne, in 1896 was elected as the first Black in the West Virginia legislature.

Many ministers and organized churches became concerned with the civil rights of Black people during this time. They advocated an end to discrimination, segregation, and racial bigotry. The 1872 General Conference of the A.M.E. Church passed several resolutions. One of them read:

Resolved, that we hereby pray that the Congress of the United States, now in session, pass the "Civil Rights Bill," now pending and offered by the Hon. Charles Sumner, of Massachusetts, to the end that equal rights may be awarded to every American citizen traveling on the high-ways of the nation (Smith, 1968, p. 130).

Black church membership grew rapidly following the Civil War. The Baptist Church by 1870 had grown to more than 500,000 members. The A.M.E. Church, which had gone underground in the South during the Civil War, emerged and expanded its membership greatly in both the North and South. The A.M.E. Zion Church grew from approximately 25,000 in 1860 to 200,000 in 1870.

With the Reconstruction period at an end, the political activity of most Black preachers also ended. Many returned

full-time to the pulpit and sought to administer to their constituents as best they could from a less politically active position. It was not a good time for Blacks in the North or South to become very vocal. In addition to the fact that racial tolerance was at a low point, the courts and criminal justice system seemed also to be against Blacks.

E. Franklin Frazier (1963, p. 43) noted that "as the result of the elimination of Negroes from the political life of the American community, the Negro Church became the arena of their political activities." The political activities within the church seemed to have fostered an activist following that surfaced again during the era of the New Deal and carried into the fifties.

During the Civil Rights struggle of the 1950 and 1960 decades, it was the church, in most cities of civil strife, which was in the forefront of the protest movement. Some religious leaders used the pulpit to suggest a link between the early Jewish martyrs and Black people (Cleage, 1969; Dunston, 1974).

Not all interpretation of the history and functioning of Black religious traditions have presented the Negro Church as a force in inducing social change. Myrdal (1944, pp. 851-852) is perhaps the most famous of those who saw the church as ". . . often having functioned to provide Black people with an escape, an institution within which they could exercise leadership autonomously, but only so long as they

did not in any important way challenge the existing system of economic and social domination of Black people." In short, in this view, the classic Marxian phrase describing religion as the "opiate of the people" could be seen as applicable.

In an influential article written as the Civil Rights Movement was winding down, Gary T. Marx (1969) sought to interpret the role of the Black Church in that mass movement. He concluded that there were indeed two types of co-existing religiosity in the contemporary religious traditions of Black people. One of these did tend to substitute religious activity for social activism in an escapist fashion. The other, however, had been very important in the Civil Rights Movement; it fostered the dedication of those large numbers of Black people who struggled to bring about change.

Other Blacks have stressed that the church can no longer move "innocently" through history without being accountable (Boesah, 1977). There are writers and theologians who express the view that the church and religion has always been the core of protest (Cone, 1969; Herzog, 1972; Johnson, 1971; Jones, 1971). King (1967) tried to show that the church and religion plays a significant role in determining whether the Black arena develops as a community or erupts in chaos. Frazier (1963, p. 44) says "for the Negro masses . . . the Negro Church community has been a nation within a nation."

### The Churches of Johnson's Crossing

A number of viewpoints on the role of the Black church and Black preachers have been printed in recent years. However, the problem of the church and social change as has been delineated by much of this writing does not seem to apply to Johnson's Crossing. There are three organized churches in this community and all are of the Baptist denomination. It is said that they are all the outgrowth of the original Gilgal Baptist Church. A brief discussion of each of these churches is necessary here.

#### Gilgal Baptist Church

Gilgal is the oldest of the three churches, having been founded by slaves in 1863. The original name for the church was "Bush Harbor." The original location was alongside a lake on the opposite side of SR 20. Bush Harbor burned down mysteriously back in 1868 and was relocated at its present site away from the lake and renamed Gilgal. It is generally recognized that the first baptism and ordinations were performed by a White Baptist Minister. He was Pastor of the Eliam Baptist Church located in present day Melrose, Florida. E. B. Timmons, the pastor, recognized the need for Negroes to have their own organized church, so he performed the official ceremonies.

Each year since the founding, the members of Gilgal have celebrated the beginning of their church. Although many

members have left the community for various reasons, they return from as far away as Jacksonville, Florida, 70 miles away, on the third Sunday of each month. This is the day that services are held at Gilgal. The members and visitors seem to take this time for reunion with friends and relatives. At the church can be found the local cemetery. The original founders and their families are buried there. After service the family members could be seen wandering through the tombstones and headstones pointing out the places where relatives are buried. They are proud of the church and their heritage.

Gilgal, during the time of this writing, had the youngest of the ministers of the area. He was not seminary trained, but he had a way of delivering his sermons in the style of modern day Black preachers. Dr. Harry V. Richardson (1966) has stated: "Recent figures show that only one out of fifteen men entering the ministry has had seminary training. In other words, 92 percent of the men entering the Negro ministry each year are professionally unprepared." The minister did not "whoop" and "holler," the old style which consisted of jumping, shouting, and screaming to incite the audience. He chose, rather, to open his sermons with a song delivered by him and would talk about present-day living and how to survive in today's world. This delivery differed from Frazier's (1949) assertion that the Black church seems to be "other-worldly." The older Blacks in the audience would give a few "amens" but nobody would shout. Senior citizens said that he could deliver a sermon but he couldn't "preach."



Usually, after the minister has delivered the message and given the invitation to join, a deacon will stand up and start one of the songs that bring back memories of that "ole time religion." These songs reach back to the days of slavery when most of the slaves had only going home, death, and the resurrection to look to for their future. One such song sung frequently in this church says:

I mus' tell Jesus all of my troubles  
 I cannot bear these burdens alone  
 I mus' tell Jesus, I mus' tell Jesus  
 Jesus can help me Jesus alone

A favorite song of one of the older deacons says:

I wanna go, where Jesus is  
 I wanna go, where Jesus is  
 I wanna go, where Jesus is  
 Dats' de reason I wanna go--I wanna go

Meet my mother over there, where Jesus is  
 Meet my mother over there, where Jesus is  
 Meet my mother over there, where Jesus is  
 Dats' de reason, I wanna go--I wanna go.

Usually, this song brings about a lot of hand clapping and shouting by the audience. If the Deacon is particularly active and moves among the people or crosses in front of the putpit, the audience tends to rise and move with the rhythm of the beat. Sometimes this kind of singing might go on for 15 or 20 minutes, depending upon the number of people who are fainting or shouting. On a given Sunday when the minister is caught up in the "spirit," he might stand up and continue the song while at the same time preach to the people who by now

are warmed and ready to receive the "Holy Ghost." Preaching at this point is entirely different than the written script. This is when he "reaches back and raises mother from the dead." Usually this takes the form of talking about mother being gone or father being gone:

I got a mother, In that land  
Come a time, I'll shake her hand  
In time I'll meet her, in that land  
In that land, Oh Lord, where I'm bound.

When services are over on the Sundays that the preacher joins in with the deacons and shouts, then the people say that the spirit was in the church. Although they may not remember what was said, they can relate to the action that took place. When service dismisses, the people usually linger around the church to speak with people that they might not see for another month or to shake hands with the minister who is not a full-time pastor at this church but has to service another as well.

The minister, not being a permanent resident of the community, does not show any political inclination while in the pulpit. Whether it is because the members, like some rural Black churches, don't believe in their pastors being politicians, or unconcern on the part of the pastor, this researcher was unable to discern. However, this nonpolitical stances might be reflective of the whole community until recent times. Whatever the reasons, Gilgal is still respectfully spoken of as the church with a "heritage."

### Mount Bethel Baptist Church at Edgars

The second church established in the community was named Mount Bethel. For some reason that no one has been able to explain, it is called Mount Bethel Baptist Church at Edgars. Edgars is a small community approximately four miles away. The church is actually in the old Oak Grove Elementary school area, near the Westside Community Center, one-fourth mile from the intersection of SR 20 and C21. Some of the residents prefer to call the church Oak Grove because of its location. The researcher chose to do the same; hence throughout this work, it shall be referred to as Oak Grove Baptist Church.

Oak Grove Baptist Church was begun in 1887. Some of the older residents say it started as result of problems between families in Gilgal Baptist Church. If one could say that a church had "class," Oak Grove Baptist would be considered the church that was the "classiest" of the three in this community. Services are held on the second and fourth Sundays of each month and sometimes a fifth Sunday.

The same people who supported Gilgal on the third Sunday, support Oak Grove Baptist on the second and fourth Sundays. There are a few exceptions. The Gilgal members may not be members of Oak Grove, but they participate actively in the services. They may serve on the Usher Board or sing in the choir. One senior citizen who sings the old gospel songs, leads off in song after the sermon in both churches. The community has no problem with this. Mrs.

Walker, who is a member of Oak Grove, told the researcher that she once suggested that the two churches combine as one and pool the limited resources of the community. She said that the members of both churches wanted to run her out of town. She might have been joking, but the people feel very strongly about their individual churches.

The Pastor of Oak Grove Baptist is one of the first local Black community politicians. He was the first Black person from western Putnam County to run for political office. He ran for the school board. He was defeated, but in defeat he gained a certain measure of respect from other Blacks as well as some Whites in the area. In his sermons, the Pastor usually presents a "message" to the people before he starts to "call Aunt Jane." "Calling" means "whooping" for those persons who want or need to shout. On many occasions the Pastor will bring in outside speakers to deliver the message. This tends to increase the participation for the day because most speakers usually bring a following with them.

At Oak Grove, the Pastor tends to deliver sermons which might be considered political by some observers. He tries to show in his message that the ethics of the bible can apply to the liberation struggle (Jones, 1974). The Pastor also has a more active following on matters of a political nature. He allows political rallies and potential office seekers to use the church for their campaigns. This church, although steeped in the older religious tradition of the

Baptist Church, is quite secular in its approach to religion and the world (Johnston, 1954, p. 59).

The church has two choirs, one of young people who sing songs in the modern nature, and an older group which is referred to in some churches as the "amen" choir. The "amen" choir usually sings in the style of Black choirs of many years ago. They still sing in "long meter" or "short meter." These are songs which have no certain pattern that one can write on paper, but the "church goers" feel the timing and sing in perfect unison with the leaders of the group. This group performs only occasionally, usually the time of special programming.

On many occasions, the minister after delivering his sermon will strike up a song. These songs usually are ones that seek help for troubled hearts or minds of the day. They don't usually emphasize the world of tomorrow, but they seek help today. One such song is:

I want Jesus to walk with me  
 I want Jesus to walk with me  
 While I'm on this tedious journey  
 I want Jesus to walk with me

Hold my hand Lord, Please hold my hand  
 Hold my hand Lord, Please hold my hand  
 While I'm on this tedious journey  
 I want Jesus to walk with me.

Although the Pastor does not emphasize the emotionalism spoken of by Johnston (1954), he said that he recognizes that this kind of religious expression served the Black man well during his early history in the Americas. He said that

"it is not my style to create strong emotional favor among the congregation. However, I still have to create an atmosphere which allows the members to give vent to their feelings." As one Black woman stated, "whenever the burdens of this world and the tribulations of life seem too much for me to bear, I just take it to the Master upstairs and place it in his hands. I know then that everything is going to be alright. I don't shout in church, but I do sing and feel good about it."

There is no cemetery at Oak Grove Baptist. The residents still prefer burial at Gilgal or other areas away from the community. Oak Grove does, however, have dining facilities where meals are often served after service.

#### Magnolia Baptist Church

Magnolia Baptist is the newest and smallest of the churches in Johnson's Crossing. It is also the least attended of the three churches. Its location is on SR 20 and is one-half mile east of the SR 20 and C21 intersection. This area is called Whitesville.

Magnolia Baptist was founded in 1891 and had its own Pastor, different from the other two Pastors. The members have services on the first Sunday only. This in itself is a drawback to church attendance. The church is small and cramped inside having seating space for less than one hundred people. It draws mostly from the members of the other churches because it has no strong permanent membership.



It seems to be a church in trouble, but the few members want to keep it going.

The researcher attended this church fewer times than he attended the other churches, but each time he attended, there was a different minister. It seemed that the permanent Pastor was in trouble with the community residents. At one service, the speaker was a female minister who was able to rouse the emotions of the congregation as well as any male.

Magnolia Baptist operates its service in the manner of Gilgal Baptist with a notable exception. The Pastor tries from the outset of his sermon to stir or exhort the audience to a highly emotional state. The church being small and rather tight, the Pastor seems almost close enough to the congregation to reach out and touch them.

The services are opened up with a song followed by prayer from one of the Deacons. On a typical Sunday, the prayer would be prayed in the following manner:

Our Father, Our Father, Our Father who art  
in Heaven, we come before you this morning  
with bowed heads and humble hearts.

We want to just say thank you. Thank you  
for last night's lying down, and this morning  
rising up to face another day.

If it wasn't for you Lord, we might be in some  
lonesome graveyard. So, we just want to thank  
you. Thank you for being so good to us.

We realize Our Heavenly Father that you're a  
doctor who's never lost a patient you're a  
lawyer who's never lost a case.

Oh Father, Oh Lord, Come on and help me Jesus,  
Dig your ever loving fingers into my heart  
Wrap me in the bosom of your love.

And oh Lord Jesus--When we come to the end of  
our journey, When we can't sing anymore--when  
we can't shout anymore--when we can't pray  
anymore--give us a home in your Kingdom where  
we shall ever dwell with thee--Amen.

The prayer is usually done in a singing and preaching style. if it is a "strong" prayer, the church responds by repeating the last words of each line by the praying person, while others hum. Sometimes a soft song is introduced during the prayer and all the congregation joins in.

By the time the Pastor gets up, the congregation is already well "warmed." At this time the Pastor announces the order of service and the program continues. When the Pastor comes up again, it is time for the sermon. Usually the choir has sung a song designed once again to get the congregation ready to receive the message.

The Minister at this time usually reads a short passage of scripture to start his sermon. If the church is still stirring from the choir, the minister goes into the "meat" of the sermon rather than diminish the emotional feelings that are already present:

It was early on one Tuesday morning when the  
Lord touched my heart and I cried glory--glory--  
glory to his name. I know it must be Jesus, ha,  
who suffered and died at Calvary, ha, dowsed  
the fires of Heaven, ha, set the stars in the  
blackness, ha, spoke with Isaac and Jacob, ha,  
cooled the firey furnace, ha, One day Jesus  
shall place his foot on the neck of the sea, ha,  
the other foot on dry land, ha.

His chariot wheels shall be running knee deep in fire, ha, He shall take his friend through an unclouded sky, ha, They shall place their hands on the "hosanna" fan, ha, and they shall stand around his beautiful throne and praise His name forever and ever--Amen.

The service is ended, the minister doesn't normally stay around too long. The home of the permanent minister was in Tampa, a city approximately 100 miles away. He usually tried to leave as soon as possible. Magnolia Baptist, like Oak Grove Baptist, has no cemetery of its own. They buried their dead as far way as Interlachen, eight miles away. The survival of the church was in doubt as of this writing.

### Jackie's Liquors

When one enters Johnson's Crossing from either direction, the one visible establishment is Jackie's Liquors. It is located at the intersection of SR 20 and C21, and on the corner. It is a neat concrete structure with parking spaces for the customers in front.

Other than the community center and the churches, Jackie's Liquors seemed to be the "hub" of the social life of the community. The business is White-owned, but the majority of the clientele are Black. However, being on a major highway midway between two cities seemed to have aided the business quite handsomely. The liquor store is located across the street from the "tree" and is the supplier for most of the

beverage that is consumed there. It is said that Jackie, a White female, placed trash cans under the "tree" in order to avoid having to view the unsightly conditions that arise when beer cans, wine bottles, and whiskey containers pile up.

The package store of Jackie's has been flourishing for a number of years, having been started in 1956. Jackie was not an original resident of the community, having moved there from Palatka. Recently, a bar has been added to the package store. It is open mostly on the weekends during the warm months of the year because the local inhabitants prefer to be in the cool fresh air on the outside, particularly the "tree." The only employee other than Jackie and her husband was a Black male who worked the bar part-time.

On the weekends, one could see cars lined along the highway leading to the store. The researcher knew people who came from Gainesville quite often in order to "juke at Jackie's." The friendliness of the bar patrons and the jovial atmosphere were the reasons given. There was very little rowdy behavior permitted because Jackie hired a private bouncer for the weekend activities. When baseball games were held in the community, many of the fans, as well as the players, would gather at Jackie's for an evening of socializing. This was truly a vital establishment in the community.

### The "Tree"

As one travels through many rural towns in North Central Florida, it is not uncommon to find a package store either on the fringes of the Black community or on the highway. Alongside or very near the store would be a large tree. Johnson's Crossing was no exception.

The "tree" for Johnson's Crossing was located on the corner at the intersection of SR 20 and C21. On any day that the weather permits, people could be seen gathered under the "tree." From early morning till after sundown they congregated there. It was the gathering place where many a "bull session" was held.

In the afternoon was the time for most of the drinking that occurred daily. The men would walk across the street to Jackie's Liquors and purchase their beverage then come back to the "tree" to enjoy it. They said that they enjoyed being in the open, and it also gave them a chance to see other people as they passed the corner. There did not seem to be much "hard liquor" consumed on the premises, but there was plenty of beer.

Drinking was not the only activity that took place at the "tree." Some of the youngsters had taken up the urban habit of smoking "doogie." Doogie is the word used for pot--marijuana. When many of the youngerster smoked, however, they seemed to give respect to their elders and "fired up" when their backs were turned.

Other activities took place under this community institution. An old cable spool that had been left by the power and light company was brought to the "tree" and tilted over. This became the table for card playing. When the weather was good, men who did not work or were retired could be seen engaged in the game of bid whist. The researcher had been in the community and playing cards under the "tree" for six months before he realized that the men also gambled with the cards. On the weekends the game switched to poker and a lot of money changed hands.

The men did a lot of storytelling under the "tree," and this involved a bit of "cussing." However, the researcher never heard the men use the kind of cursing that was done by two women who came up one weekend. They were almost drunk when they arrived with their cooler full of beer. They sat under the "tree" with the men and cursed most of them. Each of the women looked as though she weighed more than 200 pounds and could hold her own with anyone. One was very fair skinned, and the other was ebony black. The men tried to ignore them, but this only made the women laugh and curse more. To them, it was fun, but some of the men were clearly embarrassed. They refused to say to those women what they would ordinarily say to a man. After being ignored for more than an hour, the women left. The men were relieved and resumed their activities.

The tree is also the scene of many a great debate between the "wise men" of the community. The researcher was present



when a memorable argument took place. One participant, "T" was saying that the most expensive stone is jade. "Denver" was the other participant. The argument went like this:

"T" : "Everybody knows how hard jade is to find. It is most expensive stone in the world."

Denver: "Nigga, you're crazy. Go to a store and try to buy some jade, then try to buy a diamond. You'll see which is the most expensive."

"T" : "Man, don't tell me, I know. The only place you can find jade in the world is China and India."

Denver: "Bet, Nigger! Any amount you want. Diamond is more expensive and anybody with common sense knows this. So, put your money where your mouth is."

"T" : "I don't have to bet. I don't want to take your money 'cause I know what I'm talking about. (At this time he recognizes the researcher and turns to him.) "Here's a college man he can tell you. Tell him man, tell him that jade is more expensive than diamond."

Researcher: "I'm sorry but I really don't want to get involved in this discussion. No matter what I say, someone is going to get angry. So, I'd rather stay out."

"T" : "No, go ahead. Ain't nobody going to get mad. Just tell these dumb niggers."

Researcher: "Well, since you insist. Diamond is a more precious stone than jade. A Ruby is the most expensive and diamond is next." (There was a pause as "T" stared at the researcher and then turned to the other men.)

"T" : "What the hell do you know? All you College M\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_\_s think you know so much. If you're so smart, why come you

ain't rich? I work for a gymologist and he told me that jade was more expensive and that's what I'm going to believe."

From that day on, the researcher was very careful not to involve himself in the "debates" under the tree.

The "decent" people of the community did not frequent the "tree." If they had to get someone from there, they would usually remain in their automobiles and talk rather than be seen standing there. Respectable girls were not allowed to frequent that spot but could park on the other side and call their mates who would then go over to them.

The "tree" was also the public urinal. On the backside, there were some small saplings and the men would venture over to these rather than make a long trip home. With all of the beer that was consumed, those saplings were lucky to have gotten as large as they were. No one seemed to mind or notice when someone walked over to the area. Although there was a restroom at Jackie's, across the street, it seemed to be too much bother to walk over there.

In spite of the negatives that might be associated with the "tree," it is an integral part of the community. When it dies or is destroyed, a part of the community is lost--a part that most visitors see upon first entering the community known as Johnson's Crossing.

### Home Appearance

While traveling through the community, the researcher noticed the neat appearance of the homes, which did not seem to be typical of Black rural communities. Therefore, a checklist was devised to determine the inner and outer structure of the respondent's homes. The results are as follows:

A. <u>Construction of House:</u>	Brick	23 (27%)
	Frame	50 (59%)
	Mobile Home	12 (14%)
B. <u>Outer Appearance:</u>	Painted	78 (92%)
	Unpainted	7 ( 8%)
C. <u>Utilities:</u>	Running Water	80 (95%)
	Gas	68 (80%)
	Oil Heat	31 (36%)
	Lighting Fix- tures	81 (95%)
	Oil Lamps (Some homes have lamps and lighting.)	7 ( 8%)
D. <u>Refrigerator/Ice Box:</u>	Yes - 82 (96%) No - 3 ( 4%)	
E. <u>Washing Machine:</u>	Yes - 58 (68%) No - 26 (31%) No Response - 1	
F. <u>Telephone:</u>	Yes - 57 (67%) No - 26 (31%) No Response - 1	
G. <u>Television:</u>	Yes - 81 (95%) No - 4 ( 5%)	
H. <u>Automobile:</u>	Yes - 56 (66%) No - 29 (34%)	

Ninety-two percent of the homes in the study area were painted. This seemed unusual for a rural setting. One would normally expect more of the "clap-board," run-down, unpainted

home that is usually depicted as typical of the Black rural South. The residents of this area seemed to take pride in their houses and property.

Striking too, was the fact that 58 percent had washing machines. Gone are the days of the big "boiling pot" and wash tubs in the back yards which was typical a few years ago. In some minds, a washing machine is a luxury. In Johnson's Crossing, it is viewed as just another necessary appliance.

Television antennas can be seen rising above nearly all of the homes in the community. It seems that this is a necessity for this area. In the evenings, this is one of the few entertainment outlets. At one time, in the community, a T.V. set was a status symbol. Today, it is unusual not to have one. In one of the four homes that have no television, the researcher was told that "television is a tool of the devil and I won't have one in my house." The other three houses do not want to have another bill to pay, especially when it's for something they deem unnecessary.

From the appearance of these homes one might speculate on the reasons for the differences in these and other rural Black communities. However, the fact is clear that Johnson's Crossing does not approach the stereotypical view of most rural communities. There seems to be a sense of community pride held by the majority of the people that will not allow the area to deteriorate.

## CHAPTER IV METHODS OF COLLECTING DATA

Before the description of Johnson's Crossing and its people, the manner in which these data were gathered should be described. Four methods of fieldwork were relied upon in the community, each complementing the other. The methods used were of (1) the public library and local government offices as secondary sources, (2) the key informant, (3) participant observation, and (4) the questionnaire.

### Secondary Sources

Before attempting to study the lives of the people of Johnson's Crossing, the researcher considered it necessary to gather background information about the area. Thus, for demographic information, a number of visits were made to the governmental offices at the county seat, Palatka. A determination of the true boundaries and population of the area designated as Johnson's Crossing was needed. It was discovered that the target community is an unincorporated area and an accurate accounting of the population could not be garnered very easily. The county planning office could identify the populace according to the ownership of plots of land grants

(see General Highway Map, Figure 2). The information was not current enough for the researcher's purposes. The registrar's office could identify registered voters, but many citizens of the area are not registered to vote. Once again the data were not sufficient for the researcher's objectives. At this point, a decision was made to devise a questionnaire which could be used to do a complete community census. The census data could also be used by county officials and members of local political organizations. Although ideas for the research were being formulated as early as February, 1977, the field work wasn't begun until April of that year. It started with the visits to the county planning office and the registrar's office. These visits were made during the weekdays, which means that the researcher had to arrange his workload at the University of Florida to allow time to make the forty-eight mile trip to Palatka. Once there, little time was lost in going to the county planning office, registrar's office, courthouse, and library. Fortunately for the researcher, all of these buildings are located within three blocks of each other.

Palatka, being a small town (population of about 10,000), is typical of many similar sized towns. A "communication system" exists which alerts the necessary officials to the fact that something unusual is taking place. Since the researcher let it be known during the initial visit to the county registrar's office that research was being conducted



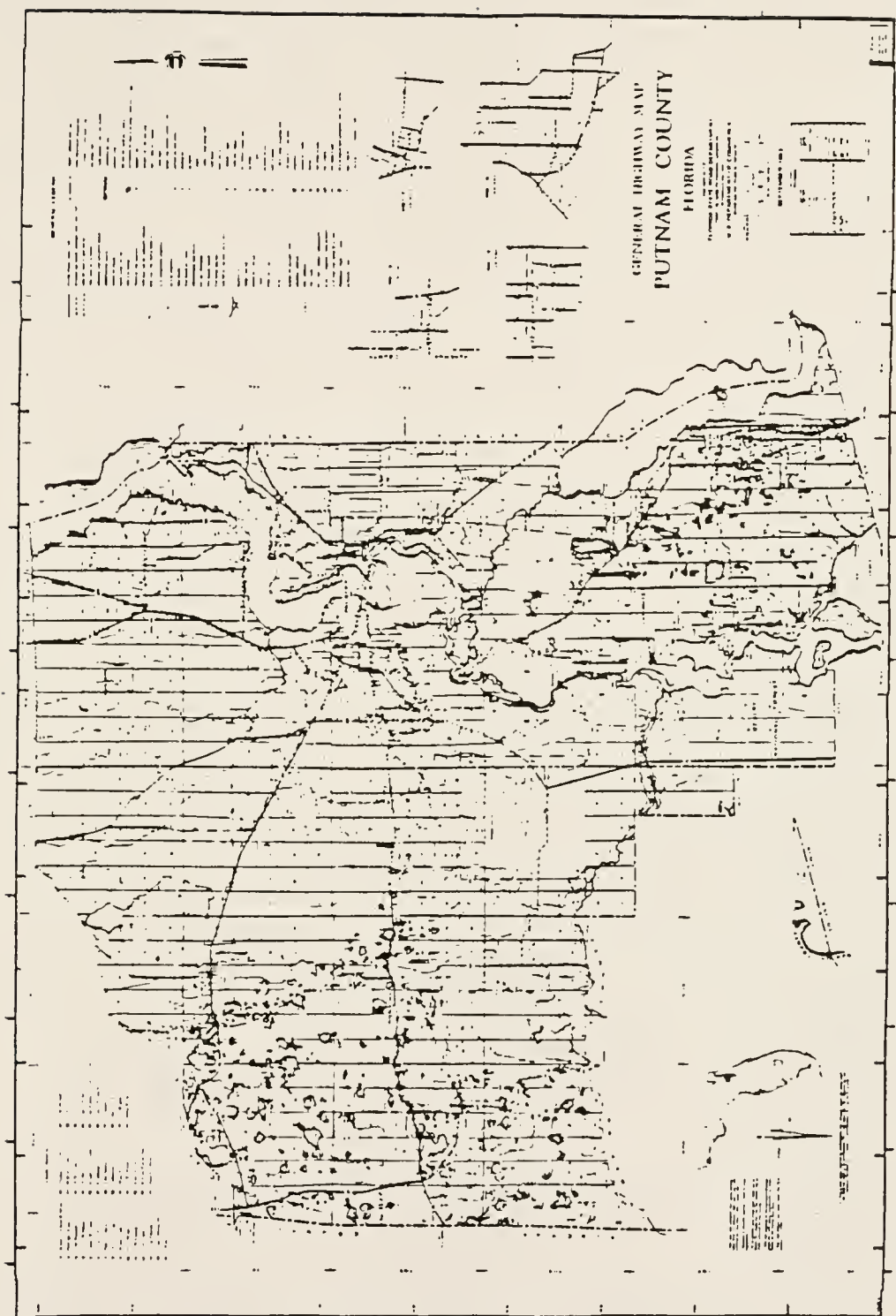


Figure 2. Map of Putnam County.

for the University of Florida, the word was relayed to other offices in the county system. The clerks that met with the researcher were very cooperative and friendly. They tried to direct this researcher to other possible sources of information.

The county planner's office was at the time conducting a research project for the city of Palatka. During a meeting he directed the researcher to the Palatka Public Library where background information of the area could be located. The suggestion of the library proved invaluable because it was there that the proposal for this research was finally completed.

The Palatka Public Library, located on a major thoroughfare through the city, housed very valuable information about the beginnings of the county and surrounding areas. Two unpublished volumes there, written during the early 1930's, revealed the names of persons who could assist in the completion of this research. The historical significance of Palatka and Putnam County to East Florida, as well as the founding of the various townships within the county, is delineated in these unpublished works. Reference was made to historical documents which could be found in original form only at the University of Florida's P. K. Yonge Library (See Appendix A). The researcher made extensive use of these materials before proceeding with face-to-face encounters. (This technique of unobtrusive measures is discussed by Webb et al., 1966, Chapter 3.)

The unpublished works, Alan Swanson, Pilo-Taikita: A History of Palatka, Florida and Robert Dowda, A History of Palatka and Putnam County, gave background data on the early history of East Florida and Putnam County. These led the researcher to other materials which proved helpful in learning of the settling of the area called West Putnam, of which Johnson's Crossing is a part. The librarian could not allow the unpublished books to be removed from the building because they are the only ones that were printed. These books are usually kept in a special section of the director's office and one has to know of the books or he will never get a chance to see them. After a number of visits, the librarians knew what to get when they saw the researcher coming in the building.

The City of Palatka is very proud of its library. Today it displays with pride the cannonball that was fired from a Yankee gunboat in 1862 and embedded itself in the library wall. This is a proud city with a proud heritage in the formation of East Florida and Johnson's Crossing!

#### The Key Informant

Whereas the history of the county could be obtained from the library, very little was found on the Johnson's Crossing community. However, there were references to the communities surrounding Johnson's Crossing. From these data, one had to

infer certain relationships and outcomes. Therefore, the "key informant" (Whyte, 1955, p. 301; Dalton, 1964, pp. 65-66) became important in the research. The unstructured interview (McCall and Simmons, 1969; Filstead, 1970; Lofland, 1971) was used by the researcher. Four informants were singled out who knew the area and its people, had resided in the community for all or most of their lives, and were respected by most of the people. These four were invaluable in this research. Data which could not be obtained from the questionnaire were supplied by these informants.

One of these informants was the local, self-styled, community leader. She made a point of knowing everyone in the community, and if she didn't have information, she could direct one to the proper source. It was with her aid that most of the older citizens came to know the researcher.

This leader, to be referred to as Mrs. M\_\_\_\_, was the first informant contacted by the researcher. Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ was proud of her community and the position she held within it. After having been away for a number of years, she said that she is now "home to die." This informant readily volunteered the knowledge she had of the community. Many hours were spent listening to stories of the old days. Mrs. M\_\_\_\_ let it be known that in the old days, her father was most powerful in that community. It seems that there was another "settlement" which was three miles from their home. This town, called Carlton, had the only post office in the area, and

Mrs. M\_\_\_\_'s father was the postmaster. Mrs. M\_\_\_\_'s family was so prominent that the land on which they lived was named for them. Today, that name is still respected by the local residents of the community.

This informant, to be referred to as Mrs. F\_\_\_\_, was also a valuable asset to the research. Mrs. F\_\_\_\_ held a position in the community which allowed her to be aware of most of the community activities. The researcher found her to be a warm and sincere individual who exuded an air of honesty. She became the one person who was consulted chiefly to confirm or check the statements or conversations held with others in the community activities. Many hours were spent in her presence, even when she was not being interviewed. Observing her in her activities gave this writer information that might have been missed by asking questions.

Mrs. F\_\_\_\_ contributed to the development of the questionnaire and census form that was later used to garner data about the community. She had need of this information in her work project, so forces were combined, with the understanding that data would be shared when the work was completed (See Appendix B). It was Mrs. F\_\_\_\_ who located the interviewers who helped with the door-to-door survey.

Mrs. J\_\_\_\_, church historian, was another of the vital informants. She was a little lady, 94 years old, who didn't appear to be a day over 60. Very softly she gave data on the history of the oldest church in the area and related how



the other churches grew from the original. She was not pleased with the tape recorder, so it had to be put aside. However, she did allow notes to be taken as she talked. She had been in Johnson's Crossing all of her life and knew about everybody who came there for any length of time. She knew the history of most of the prominent families of the community, and she also served the interviewer as a check on the validity of statements by the others.

California Red was the most talkative of the informants. If he could be believed, he knew about everybody in town. He was first interviewed at the tree (which has been described earlier). He was a retired University of Florida employee and knew not only Johnson's Crossing, but about misbehavior at the University as well. This informant, having lived in the community most of his life, was very knowledgeable about the social life of the community. Of course, from where he stood on the corner or in the bar, he figures he didn't miss too much. He could tell who was dating whom and who was "tipping out" on their "old ladies." He could tell of the wife beaters and the husbands who ran from their women. However, his favorite tale was about the coaches at the University who allegedly slipped into the girls' dorms at night. Over a period of weeks, approximately six hours were spent in the company of this interesting fellow, California Red.

The first month of face-to-face contact in the target area was spent trying to be visible to the citizens, while at



the same time trying not to appear too suspicious. Rural and small town people are usually wary of strangers, especially ones who ask questions.

Generally, the people of Johnson's Crossing were friendly, but not to the point, the researcher felt, that personal questions about one's family life could be asked. Visits during this period were mostly on the weekend, with one or two days during the week when time could be taken from the job at the University. Mrs. M\_\_\_\_\_ informed the researcher that since a large percentage of the population was away at work during the day, the visibility that was sought would be at a minimum level, but that this was good. It would give the people more time to learn of the research mission. Because of the time of year (Winter-Spring), few of the non-employed would be outside of their homes anyway. As warm weather approached, more time was spent in the community. By the seventh month, it was felt that the researcher had gained credibility enough in the community to ask questions of a personal nature without offending or causing alarm among the residents.

The researcher did not know at the time that a study had been conducted in the community six years earlier by Dougherty (1972). This study had upset some of the residents and they were wary of other researchers. Consequently, more time was needed in order to create confidence in the observer.

### Participant Observation

Greatest reliance was placed on the techniques of participant observation (Zelditch, 1976, pp. 566-76; McCall and Simmons, 1969). In Johnson's Crossing, the association between the observer and his subjects, the face-to-face personal relationships, proved to be invaluable in gaining the trust of the residents. However, after a few months it became apparent that participation by the observer was needed as well as other methods in order to insure reliability of the data.

The observer was invited to participate in many of the activities of the community, ranging from card playing to delivering a sermon at one of the local churches. Having learned that the observer had once been in the ministry, one of the informants tried to place him in the pulpit as a "Spiritual leader." The offer was turned down because of the necessity of also visiting the local bar and recreation spot for other observations. This might not have, as one resident said, "set too well here in this community." "Here, our preacher has to walk the straight and narrow." However, religious services, as well as community meetings and social affairs, were attended.

Participation in organized meetings at the community center proved most valuable. It tended to lessen the natural suspicion that rural residents have of "outsiders" coming into

their communities with probing questions. A certain trust was gained when a few key community people knew that a book was being written about their community and research was being conducted by a Black person from the University of Florida rather than someone from the local government offices. Most of the persons then wanted to be as helpful as possible.

In the process of the study, observations were made at six locations which served as focal points of community gatherings. These observation points were (1) the Westside Community Action Center, (2) Jackie's Liquors, (3) the "tree" and three Baptist Churches (4) Gilgal Baptist, (5) Mount Bethel Baptist, and (6) Magnolia Baptist. A discussion of each of the observation posts has been presented (see Chapter III).

During this phase of the research, the observer was given a State University System grant from the State of Florida. In effect, the grant allowed the researcher to receive salary for one year while conducting the study in Johnson's Crossing. In October of 1977, participation in the life of the community began without the added factor of having to rush back to the University every day. Time was spent in their community from October through March of 1978, not every-day, but enough so that the people came to view the researcher as one of the community. The familiarity was such that W\_\_\_\_\_ said that he didn't see the researcher as "no university man, you're just another nigger to me." That meant that he was "in," accepted.

Initially, the observer tried to use a small portable tape recorder when attending some of the social gatherings at the tree and the bar. Quickly, the folks let it be known that they didn't appreciate it. Therefore, after leaving some of the social gatherings, it was a task recording some of the events of the day. This was especially so after three or four beers. On several occasions this was necessary in order for the men to engage in conversation, a kind of "warm-up" for talking, laughing, or joking. However, an attempt was made after each visit to record accurately what had taken place.

### The Questionnaire

After the decision was made to devise a questionnaire (Lazarsfeld, 1954; Maccoby, 1954), the local Community Action Agency in Johnson's Crossing was contacted concerning the feasibility of such a proposal. The thought occurred to the director that the data could also be used in preparation of the annual reports that the agency had to submit to H.E.W. in Atlanta, Georgia. The staff of the local agency could be used to participate in the census/questionnaire, that is, the door-to-door canvassing. However, approval had to be given by the County Community Action Agency director in Palatka. A meeting with the director was arranged.

In the discussion of the project with the director of CAA (Community Action Agency) in Palatka it was learned that the staff on the Westside CAA was being reduced. If the local director wanted to assist in the study, there was no problem; however, there could be no other staff assistance. The director agreed that the study could be useful to their reporting system and gave it her blessings.

The Westside director decided that she would assist in the survey, and it was determined that paid local citizens, ones who knew the community well, could be used to assist. Over a period of two weeks, five young women were selected to assist with the project. After three orientation meetings in which the area and the survey were described, the questionnaire explained, and the procedures for handling the paperwork discussed, the staff was ready to canvas the community designated as Johnson's Crossing.

The staff worked six hours per day at the rate of \$3.00 an hour. The six hours could be used during the morning, afternoon, or both. The idea was to cover every household in a certain area during the day. Since most of the community was known by each of the workers, they had an idea of who was at home during certain hours and who was out. It was left to their discretion what time to visit each household. In some instances, a second visit had to be made.

The survey, having begun on Wednesday, was designed to be completed at the end of the day on Friday. However, a few of the homes had been missed due to various problems.

On Friday evening the report was made, and eleven of the homes had been left out. The workers agreed to finish these on Saturday morning when they were sure the families would be in. On Saturday afternoon, the survey ended. It was through the use of this questionnaire/census that the most reliable information was gathered.

The questionnaire was designed to elicit responses relating to family, education, occupation, politics, religion, social services, attitudes about governmental aid, and general information about housing conditions. A copy of the questionnaire is shown in Appendix B. Not all of the residents responded to the questionnaire, however, Two homeowners said they would fill out the form and bring it to the Westside center. One particularly foul-mouthed, snuff-dipping woman chased the surveyor out of her yard. Questions were asked of neighbors, however, in order to get some information on these subjects.

The information on the questionnaire was through the efforts of the researcher and the Westside Community Center director. However, the director did use guidelines and questions already provided on a form by the Office of Health Education, and Welfare (H.E.W.). Each year she had to submit surveys of the community to the Regional H.E.W. Office in Atlanta, Georgia. Items on the form relating to economics, home construction, income, selective service, and governmental aid were used in the questionnaire. Other items of interest



to the Putnam County Community Action Agency were submitted by the County director. These, along with items of interest to the researcher, make up the questionnaire. Most of the questions were written in such a way as to create no ambiguity in understanding and interpretation. The style was deliberately kept simple so that those assisting in the survey would have no problem giving an explanation should the need arise.

The focus of the questionnaire for the researcher was the five institutions, family, religion, economics, politics, and education. The Westside Center director, however, realized that this focus could be used to uncover additional data that were needed for future planning in the community.

Finally, to conclude this discussion of field methods, pencil and paper was usually, but not always, used in the presence of informants. The act of writing while having conversation seemed to disturb some informants. The little "black box" (a pocket-sized tape recorder) also seemed to cause nervousness. Therefore, the use of these methods of notetaking was limited. To offset these difficulties, notes were written or dictated immediately after each interview in order to insure the accuracy of what was learned.

The study of Johnson's Crossing is an attempt, not merely to describe the facts about the community, but also to add a meaningful interpretation of contemporary life in a Black and rural setting. For this reason, the research methods have blended the quest for information with that of understanding.

The secondary sources and the community census, bolstered by the informants and above all, the observation and interpretation based on participation in the life of the community, provide the basis for the empathetic interpretation which Weber called verstehen.

## CHAPTER V FINDINGS

The focus of the questionnaire that was developed for this study (see Appendix B) was the five institutions: family, religion, politics, education, and economics. Each of these institutions is significant in the life of a community and is no less so in Johnson's Crossing. In this chapter, each of these units will be discussed separately in the order listed above.

### Family

The Black family has been held responsible for many of the problems of Black people. The family is seen as partially responsible for the economic, social, and personal problems faced by Blacks. As Moynihan puts it ". . . not every instance of social pathology can be traced to the weakness of the family structure . . . nonetheless, at the center of the tangle of pathology is the weakness of the family structure" (Moynihan et al., 1965, p. 30).

Frazier (1957), p. 636) charged the family also when he stated, "the widespread disorganization of family life

among Negroes has affected practically every phase of their community life adjustments to the larger White world.

Because of the absence of stability in family life, there is a lack of traditions. Life among a large portion of the urban Negro population . . . lacks continuity and its roots do not go deeper than the contingencies of daily living."

More than a few writers held these views concerning the scale and consequences of family disorganization among Blacks. The acceptance of these viewpoints can be summed up by the following statement: "The general formulation of the problem that the socioeconomic system constrains the family in ways that lead to disorganization and that family organization then feeds back into the system to sustain and perpetuate social and economic disadvantage--is reasonably well accepted" (Rainwater and Yancey, 1967, p. 309).

Whereas the above studies focus on the weakness of the Black Family, Hill (1972, p. 4) has delineated characteristics of the family which he calls strengths. The characteristics which have been employed for the survival of the family are strong kinship bonds, strong work orientation, adaptability of family roles, strong achievement orientation, and strong religious orientation.

Staples (1978, p. 259) has a different view concerning Black Family instability than that of Moynihan (1965). He says, "the problems Black people face have been essentially the same for a century. These problems are not related to

family stability, but to the socioeconomic conditions that tear families asunder. . . . Whatever the future of Black families, it is time to put to rest all the theories about Black family instability." The following data should substantiate whether the people of Johnson's Crossing are described by the pathological viewpoint of Moynihan (1965) or show the kind of strengths delineated by Hill (1974).

The data presented in this section are based on observations of 85 households including 123 children, 85 adults as head of the household, and 39 other members of the community. The total household members studied in Johnson's Crossing were 247. Table 1 presents a picture of the household structure. The primary individuals in the table are defined as "household heads living alone or with persons all of whom are unrelated to him" (Nye and Berardo, 1973, p. 32).

The information just presented may be more meaningfully interpreted, perhaps, if considered in terms of the typology presented by Andrew Billingsley (1968) in his comprehensive study of Black families.

Billingsley (1968, pp. 15-21) identified three general categories of families in his typology of family structure: nuclear families that consist of husband and wife with their own children and no other members present; extended families which include in-laws and other relatives who share the same household as the nuclear family members; augmented families whose members are not related to the family head, yet live

Table 1. The Structure of Households in Johnson's Crossing.

Type of Household	Number	Percentage	Number of Children	Total Number of Persons
Husband-Wife Families				
Children Present	27	31.8	53	107
No Children Present	12	14.1	--	24
One-Parent Families				
Mother-headed	19	22.3	51	70
Father-headed	5	5.8	9	14
Primary Individuals				
Living Alone	13	15.2	--	13
Other Persons Present	9	10.5	10	19
TOTAL	85	99.7	123	247



in the same household as the nuclear family. These general categories are subdivided into twelve different types of family structures. Table 2 shows the types and subtypes of Billingsley's classification, as represented by the families interviewed in Johnson's Crossing.

The general categories and the subtypes that Billingsley (1968) identified as well as the number of Johnson's Crossing families who fit each category are briefly discussed below.

### Nuclear Family

Three specific types of families are listed under Billingsley's (1968) nuclear family types. The incipient nuclear family (Billingsley, 1968, p. 16) is one in which there is a husband and wife living together with no children. He estimates that 20 percent of all Black families are in this category. In Johnson's Crossing, there were 12 families (14.1 percent) that are of this type.

Another type of family is the simple nuclear family. In this family, the husband and wife are living together in their household with their own or adopted children, and no other members present. This is the family type that is most universal. There were 27 such families in the community of Johnson's Crossing. In Billingsley's (1968, p. 18) schema, 36 percent of families were in this category. In Johnson's Crossing the figure was 31 percent.

Table 2. Johnson's Crossing Family Structure

Types of Family (Billingsley's Classification)	Household Head		Other Household Members	
	Husband & Wife	Single Parent	Children	Other Relatives Non- Relatives
Nuclear-Family				
Incipient Nuclear Family	12*			
Simple Nuclear Family	27*		53**	
Attenuated Nuclear Family		24**	60**	
Extended Family				
Incipient Extended Family				
Simple Extended Family				
Attenuated Extended Family		9**	10**	6**
Augmented Family				
Incipient Augmented Family				
Incipient Extended Augmented Family				
Nuclear Augmented Family				
Nuclear Extended Augmented Family				
Attenuated Augmented Family				
Attenuated Extended Augmented Family				7**

\* = couples

\*\* = individuals

The third type of family is the attenuated nuclear family. This family has either a mother or father present, living together with his/her minor children in the parent's household with no other persons present. This type of family is commonly referred to as a broken family. Johnson's Crossing had 24 families of this type. Nineteen of the families (22.3 percent) were female-headed and five families (5.8 percent) were male headed. This represents a significant percentage increase when one considers that Billingsley's report shows that these families comprise only six percent of all Black families in the United States (1968, p. 18).

A contributing factor to the disparity between Johnson's Crossing and Billingsley's (1968) figure is the fact that in Johnson's Crossing, when separation occurs, the wife with her children tends to stay in the lower-cost-of-living setting of this rural area. Here she can also remain close to friends and family who offer consolation as well as support. A further cause for the variation could be attributed to the small number of households studied. Chance variations away from the mean can easily occur when the N is small. Another salient point about the attenuated nuclear family is that in Johnson's Crossing, they were less numerous than the simple nuclear family, yet they have more children (60 as compared to 53).

### Extended Family

Under the extended family types, Billingsley (1968, pp. 19-21) lists (a) the incipient extended family which consists of a married couple with no children of their own who takes in other relatives; (b) the simple extended family which is a married couple with their own children who take in relatives; and (c) the attenuated extended family which consists of a single, abandoned, legally separated, divorced or widowed mother or father living with his or her own children, who take other relatives into the household. Johnson's Crossing does not have the incipient extended or the simple extended types. However, five of the primary individuals have the children of family members living with them. The other four primary individuals have persons living with them, but they are unrelated to these household heads. These are family types not covered by Billingsley's (1968) typology.

Robert Staples (1978, p. 202) paraphrased Billingsley (1968) when he reported that Black extended families take in four classes of relations or secondary members:

"(1) minor relatives, including grandchildren, nieces, cousins, and young siblings under 18; (2) peers of the primary parents, including siblings, cousins, and other adult relatives; (3) elders of the primary parents, particularly aunts and uncles; and (4) parents of the primary unit."

In Johnson's Crossing, the extended family includes parents, siblings, grandchildren, nephews, and siblings-in-law of the head of the household. Other household members who are not part of the family by adoption, marriage, or ancestry, are classified as "augmented" family members. Table 3 shows the extent of acceptance of extended family members by the households. The term sibling refers to the brother or sister of the head of the household.

The table shows that there are several types of extended family members among the Johnson's Crossing families. The nineteen households have taken in extended family members, but seven of those are unclassifiable according to Billingsley's (1968) typology and are listed as "other non-specific." The data show only one parent of the head of the household residing with the family, while three households contain two or more parents. Two households contain one sibling under 18, and only one household has two or more siblings. There are two households with one grandchild and two households with two or more grandchildren. One household has one nephew and one household has two or more nephews. Two of the households contain one sibling-in-law. The fact that most of the residents own their own homes and have no need to room with other family members, may be reflected in the number of households that have extended family members, as well as the number of persons taken in.

The extended family/relative network which Stack (1974) refers to as "kin-structured networks," is very important in

Table 3. Membership, Other Than Spouse and Children of Head, of Extended Family Households

Relationship to Head of Household	Households with one Other Person	Households with two or more Persons	Total House- holds
Parents	1	3	4
Siblings	2	1	3
Grandchildren	2	2	4
Newpew	1	1	2
Siblings-in-law	2	0	2
Other Non-specific	1	3	4
Total			19



Johnson's Crossing as a support system. To paraphrase Billy, a subject in Stack's research, "they help each other out and that's what kinfolks are all about" (Stack, 1974, p. 45). When asked to whom they would turn to for assistance in case of family illness, 84 percent of the households stated relatives, seven percent neighbors, eight percent friends, and one percent gave no response. One must still take into account the fact that many of the residents are related; therefore, many of the relatives will be spoken of as friends.

#### Augmented Family

Billingsley lists a category which he calls the augmented family. These are families that have unrelated individuals living with them as boarders, roomers, lodgers, and other long-term guests. Johnson's Crossing comes closest to this type with the four primary individuals who have unrelated persons living in the household. However, due to the fact that these are not husband-wife families and there are no children in the home, they do not exactly fit into the augmented category. These seven unrelated persons, for the purpose of documentation of numbers, however, were listed by the researcher under the classification of "attenuated augmented family."

## Two Families of Johnson's Crossing

In order to get a clearer picture of the family structure in Johnson's Crossing, the researcher chose two families in the community to observe more closely. Obviously, the names have been changed, but the information and descriptions are correct in every detail.

### The Roberts family

This family would be classified according to Billingsley's (1968) family types as an attenuated nuclear family. The family is broken but, in this case, the head of the household is the father. Two teenage children, a boy and a girl, complete the household unit. The father has been divorced for approximately six years as of this writing.

The researcher first met Mr. Roberts at Jackie's Liquor store when he was observed by the informant, purchasing the same brand of spirits as the informant. That immediately became a point of discussion because as the informant stated, "people around here don't drink that kind of gin, that's what we drink down south." It was learned that "down south" meant Pompano Beach, Florida, where Mr. Roberts had spent most of his married life. A drink was shared by the observer and the informant while discussions of the thrilling days down south were held.

Because of the residential propinquity of the observer and the informant in south Florida (the researcher is from

an adjacent city), an immediate friendliness was established which lasted the entire period of the study. Usually, in the late evenings when there was nothing else to do in Johnson's Crossing, the two "southerners" would talk under the old tree. Mr. Roberts said that he was the second husband of Mrs. Roberts. They met when they were both rather young. He had just finished college and she was in a cosmetology program. Mr. Roberts said that they fell in love at first sight of each other. The wife was still married at the time and had one child, a girl. After a few dates, the future Mrs. asked her husband for a divorce. Six months after they met, the Robert's became a nuclear family in Johnson's Crossing. They moved to Pompano Beach where he taught school and the wife worked in an industrial plant.

Eleven years and two children later, Mr. Roberts was the head of the household and was given custody of their only son because he threatened to run away if he had to live with his mother. The wife retained custody of both girls. This arrangement lasted almost a year and then the youngest girl decided that she too wanted to live with the father. The mother reluctantly agreed because by this time, she, the mother, was living with another man.

It seems that in south Florida Mr. Roberts was well respected by both Blacks and Whites. He has been referred to as the "unofficial Black Mayor" of Pompano Beach (this was confirmed by the researcher who visited Pompano Beach

and asked some of the residents about the informant). However, after the divorce, his reputation became tarnished. As Mr. Roberts says, "no-good women and too good whiskey was his problem." The more he drank, the more women he became involved with, and the more influence he lost. Finally he decided that he had had enough. With his two children, he left Pompano Beach and returned to Johnson's Crossing to raise his family and be near his parents.

In Johnson's Crossing, Mr. Roberts purchased a mobile home rather than live with his mother and father who had a large home and 15 acres of land. The story is told that Mr. Roberts, Sr., had purchased many tracts of land when it was \$25.00 per acre and gave most of it to his children when they became adults. That was the way Mr. Roberts, Jr., gained access to his property. The other brothers and sisters never left the community but sold most of their property.

The mobile home that Mr. Roberts and his family live in is a two bedroom, two bath, sunken living room type. The living room is on the front end of the home and is surrounded on the three sides by windows. Near the front windows is a large stereo component set, with flowers flanking each of the large speakers. On one side of the room is a large sofa and chair. On the opposite side of the room there is a loveseat along side a huge coffee table. The coffee table has a large plant sitting in the middle of

it and magazines surrounding it in the shape of a "V." There are plants hanging from the ceiling in the front set of windows and in the corner near the loveseat. The home is carpeted throughout, even in the kitchen. The home has the latest in modern appliances for the kitchen including a glass topped dining table.

The two children started out sleeping in the same bedroom. After they reached their teens, the boy slept on the sofa bed. Most of the time, however, he chose to sleep at his grandparents' home. The young man wanted to follow in his father's foot steps but he was not interested in school. He quit in the 11th grade and his father never tried to force him back to the classroom. The young lady, however, was an able student who tried to impress her father by making excellent grades. She says that she is determined to do what her older brother and sister failed to do. She wants to march across the stage during graduation.

In this community, the Roberts family is considered to be upper-middle class. They owned land. It is said that they had money and the children are educated (except for the son of Mr. Roberts, Jr.). They are recognized as high status people by members of the community. Although the community is small, young people tend to socialize in homogeneous groupings. In some cases, this has resulted in marriage within the extended family. The marriage of Mr. Roberts, Jr., is an example.

Mr. Roberts' wife belonged to the Andrews family, which was also prominent in the community. At the time of the union between the two families, the wife was sister-in-law to Mr. Roberts. Her brother was married to Mr. Roberts' sister. When marriage plans were discussed, this inter-family relationship did not enter into the conversation. The community people seemed to accept the relationship and no one was overly concerned. After returning to Johnson's Crossing, Mr. Roberts was involved in an accident. The settlement with the insurance company was substantial enough so that Mr. Roberts has not had to return to work as of this writing. The young man in the family decided that he was going to the Army as soon as he was eligible and the father agreed that this might be the best move for him to make. The daughter decided to try and finish school as soon as possible. She wants to take the General Equivalency Diploma test at the earliest possible date (to shorten her public school career). The father has tried to talk her out of this idea by explaining to her that she is too immature to finish school so early, and she needed to stay there in order to grow up. However, she was insistent that Mr. Roberts finally said "you're my baby and if that's what you want, I'll support you all the way."

#### The Holmes Family

The Holmes family consists of two adults and a six year old girl. The girl was born to the sister of "Lijah"



Holmes. They took her in to live with them when she was one year old. The child was never officially adopted, but she is accepted as the daughter of the parents. In reality, the child knows who her biological mother is. She was given this information rather early in life. She now calls her biological mother by her first name, Eva, and the mother who is rearing her, "mama." She does not know who her biological father is and there are whispers in the community that the mother does not know either. The only father that the child knows is Lijah, and she calls him "daddy." This type of family would be typed by Billingsley as the incipient extended family.

This family lives in a home that was built by Lijah. It is constructed of wood and siding with a built-in fireplace that was added for decorative as well as practical purposes. Lijah is referred to as a "Jackleg" carpenter who learned his skills by working with the carpenters rather than attending school. The structure was originally built with two bedrooms but as the family members began to come down for visits, Lijah decided he needed additional space. He eventually expanded the structure into a four bedroom, two bath house with a den and a recreation room. The recreation room contains the fireplace, a unit that was built with blowers so that it could heat the entire room. The unit burns wood which is in plentiful supply in this area of the county.

The father could be considered semi-illiterate because he has only a fourth-grade education and does not read very well. He learned early in life the auto repair business and the members of the community would bring broken down autos to him. Thus, he was able to make a decent living as a young man. He later got a job in another town as a carpenter's helper and this is how he learned the skills needed to build his own home as well as some others in the community. As a child, Lijah worked on the farm and learned about planting. As a result of these early experiences, he has one of the best and more productive gardens in an area where very little farming is done. At the time of this writing, Lijah was self-employed in Gainesville at a vegetable stand.

Mrs. Holmes, or "Annie," is from a large family. Her parents had 13 children and she is the youngest. She stayed in school long enough to finish the tenth grade. Her marriage, according to Annie, was simply because of a desire to get away from home and all of that family. All of the other children in the family had moved away years ago and she was the benefactor of all their generosities during visits. She became, as the older folks say, "spoiled." When she quit school, she had been warned of the possible pitfalls by her older brothers and sisters. She did not pay them any attention and, as she says, "a hard head makes a soft behind." Still, Annie says that the marriage had not been too bad up to that time. There was one major problem that Annie did not want to discuss initially, but

later on decided that it was alright. Annie could not have children. She did not know this when she first married, but after years of trying, she finally consulted a physician who gave her the news. As a result of this news, they decided to care for one of the children of Lijah's sister. The household was complete with the arrival of Irene.

Annie Holmes was employed in Gainesville as a domestic worker in an office. She says that her family did not want to move to Gainesville because it was too crowded and there were too many problems associated with crowded living. "All of my friends and family are here. What does Gainesville have to offer that I can't get by staying here?" Her daughter was enrolled in school in Melrose and was doing well. She said, "the only problem here is getting her up so early in the morning to go to school. Other than that, everything is fine with me. The teachers in Melrose can do just as good a job as anywhere else as long as we back them up."

The Holmes family was well liked by the residents of the community. It was said that Lijah would take a little "nip" every now and then but he never got drunk. He attended church at least every first Sunday and was very active in the services when he was there. Annie was very active in the three churches of the community and also served on a couple of boards at the Westside Community Center. Both Annie and Lijah are considered young by the community

although both are in their mid-thirties. Each has lived in the community most of their lives. Annie once left with her parents and lived in Orlando while she was an adolescent. Her father did not like the large city and after one year, he returned to Johnson's Crossing.

Lijah had been as far away as Atlanta where he lived for six months. When he returned to Johnson's Crossing, he said that it would take a thousand horses to pull him away again.

Before looking more in detail at marital status and other aspects of the household data, it must be noted that both of these families could be seen as "problem" families in that neither represented the model family composed of husband-father, wife-mother, and their own offspring. Even so, as the above accounts suggest, there is warmth, strength, and a sense of deep belonging in them.

#### Marital Status

One of the items on the questionnaire addressed the topic of marital status. Based on past research, there is little doubt that Black families are more likely to be headed by one parent than are White families (Farley and Hermalin, 1971; Glick, 1970). Recent studies have shown that in 1970 female-headed households among Black families were on the increase. Yet, sixty-seven percent of these Black families (those with children under 18) were headed

by two parents. By 1979, the total two-parent headed households had dwindled to 54.9 percent. The percent of Black families with females as head of households was 40.5 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980).

In Johnson's Crossing the total number of households responding was eighty-five. Of this nubmer, 42 were headed by males and 43 were female headed. Forty-six of the respondents had no spouse living with them and two household heads chose not to respond. Three of the households responded that they were not married but were simply cohabitating or living together. This revelation came as a mild surprise to the researcher because Black people tend to be reluctant to admit this kind of living arrangement. The respondents who had no spouse living with them were the one-parent families, both male and female headed, and those listed as primary individuals.

It is significant to note that 51 percent of these families are female headed. This is above the national average of 40.5 percent stated earlier. The fact that most of the respondents were female may, in part, account for the large number of females listed as household heads.

### Family Size

For the country as a whole, there is little doubt that fertility is higher among Black families than Whites. Extensive census data reflect this fact. In 1973, Black



females aged 15-44 who had ever been married had 2.8 children as compared with 2.2 for Whites (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1973F: 5, Table 12). In 1977, for Black females aged 15-44, the rate of live births was 89.9 per 1000. For white women the rate was 64 per 1000 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States 1979, 100th edition, p. 61).

The data show that socioeconomic factors may be a contributor to this difference in fertility. Black women who have not completed high school have a much higher fertility rate than White women of equal education, but for high school graduates, the gap is not as wide. For women who went to college, the trend was reversed (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1973 e: Tables 17, 18). In 1977, however, 65 percent of Black women who finished college expected to have one or two children while 60 percent of White women had the same expectations (Bureau of the Census, 1978). Data show that among Black females who earn under \$10,000 a year, the fertility rate is higher than for comparable Whites. However, beyond this amount, the differences are not as marked (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1971, a: Table 15).

According to the data, region as residence also has a bearing on family size. For example, Blacks who live in the South expect to have 2.3 children and the figure for Whites is 2.0. In areas outside of the South the figures are 2.2 for Blacks and 2.1 for Whites (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1978 e: Table 1).



In Johnson's Crossing, 62 percent of the households responding had children living in the home. Information obtained from the household data show that there were (at the time of the survey) only 23 pre-school children (aged 0-5) in Johnson's Crossing. Since there were 37 children in the six to ten age range, and 34 children aged 11 through 15, this was consistent with the falling birth rate nationally observed, both in the general population and among Blacks. The same source of information showed that six "children" above 21 years of age were included in the responses, indicating again that as long as the offspring lives in the home of the parents, he/she may be included in response to questions on children.

Of the 123 children in Johnson's Crossing, 19 lived in a household with no brother or sister. Only four of these were pre-school age, so this is not merely an indication of new families in formation. Eighteen children, at the other extreme, were in families having six or more children.

The researcher wanted to know the ideal size of the family in Johnson's Crossing. Thirty-eight percent of the households felt that the ideal number of children for a two-parent family was two or three. Three respondents felt that no children at all was "ideal," and seven considered only one child to be so. There also were a few respondents who thought that large numbers of children were ideal; one indicated eight or more, and two suggested six or seven

children. In general, these items of information suggest that the residents of Johnson's Crossing conform to the general United States perception that the ideal family is rather small.

#### Governmental Assistance

In Johnson's Crossing, of 70 respondents, eleven reported old age assistance and 59 received no aid from the government for themselves. There was no response from 15 of the residents. Of the 85 households, 11 reported that they have children in the home who receive Aid For Dependent Children. Seventy-four households receive no AFDC, but this number also includes those households that report no children at all.

Based on the most recent data, Putnam County has a total of 902 families who are receiving AFDC. These data include 1,825 children who received a total of \$124,725 for 1979 (U.S. Department of H.E.W., March, 1980). Of the total number of AFDC recipients, there was no breakdown according to race or ethnicity. Therefore, the Black AFDC recipients could not be counted separately. However, the total number of Black children in Johnson's Crossing who received such assistance is 27.

### Residential Patterns

Rural communities tend to have a stable rather than a transient population (Woodson, 1930). The researcher was interested in whether Johnson's Crossing had a preponderance of permanent residents, and if they maintained their status by "marrying" the land.

Fifty-six percent of the households responded that they owned their homes, while an additional 12 percent replied that they were buying. Twenty-five percent indicated that they were renting and six percent were neither renting nor buying. One percent gave no response (variations in the N reflect the fact that not all interviewees responded to all the questions).

The researcher asked the length of time (in years) that was spent in the community by the respondents. Most had been there more than four years, and 44 percent had been in the community all of their lives (see Table 4).

The location of the communities where the respondents had lived other than Johnson's Crossing was of interest to the researcher. When asked about previous residence, the persons who stated that they had been in the community all of their lives (44 percent), once again said that they had never lived anywhere else. Seventeen percent had lived in other cities in the state, and only six percent had lived in cities out of the state of Florida. Fifteen percent of the respondents did not reply.

Table 4. Number of Years Respondents Lived in Johnson's Crossing.

	Years				All Lifetime
	1-10	11-20	21-30	31+	
Number	20	7	10	10	37
Percentage	23	8	12	12	44

To the question "why did you move here?" the most frequent response was, "to be close to family" (six percent) and "get married" (six percent). Other responses ranged from "no place else to be" (four percent), to "retired" (one percent). Seventeen percent gave responses ranging from "no where to go" to "just wanted to." Forty-four percent replied that they had never left Johnson's Crossing and 22 percent gave no response.

The researcher felt it important to know how long people tended to stay away from the community once they left. Thirty percent had lived away one to ten years and two percent reported that they had stayed away for as many as 30 years. One respondent replied, "rest of life." This respondent interpreted the question to mean one having lived in the community all of his life. There was no reply from 10 respondents.

Keeping the same line of questioning, the researcher wanted to know the stability of the community in terms of the population having been born there. It was found that 71 percent of the respondents were born in the county and 35 percent were born outside. It was also found that the parents tended to be born in the same community. Sixty-seven percent of the parents were born in Johnson's Crossing. Thirty-one percent were born elsewhere and two percent did not respond.

Questions were not asked concerning relatives brought up in Johnson's Crossing who had migrated elsewhere and who, at the time of this survey, were still residing elsewhere. It would be interesting to know how many native residents of the community, still living there, were in contact with former residents--relatives or former neighbors--who now live elsewhere. It would also be interesting to know the geographical dispersion of such migration from Johnson's Crossing. Even had an effort been made to obtain such information, however, it would have been very incomplete, not only because of the fallibility of memory on the part of respondents but particularly because this technique would provide no information at all on the migration from the community of entire families where no relatives or close friends remained in the community.

Sixty-seven percent of the respondents' parents had owned land in the community and 31 percent had not. Twenty-eight percent responded that the question was not applicable to them and four gave no response. With the exception of the land that has been developed on the west side of Cowpens Lake, most of the land is still owned by the members of families that have long resided in Johnson's Crossing.

### Decision Making

Much of the debate on Black family structure has centered on family authority patterns and decision making. Early



studies indicated that the Black female, contrary to the White female, held more power in the family and, therefore, made the majority of the decisions (Blood and Wolfe, 1960). Many writers have since taken issue with such studies, however, and their criticisms are well documented (Hyman and Reed, 1969; Mack, 1971; Hill, 1972; Ladner, 1973). Recent studies have shown that working and middle class Black families tend to be equalitarian in decision making (Middleton and Putney, 1969; King, 1969; Willie, 1976).

Staples (1971) pointed out that there are situations in which Black men cannot or refuse to make decisions. However, such situations are not valid measures of the power that a Black woman possesses in the family. He says that many Black men do not openly oppose many of the decisions of the female, but this is seen as a method of conflict resolution. Staples (1971) views conflict resolution as a necessary component of decision making.

The researcher wanted to know the attitude of the Johnson's Crossing residents on decision making within the family unit. The respondents were asked to give their belief about marriage decisions. Seventy-three percent of the respondents said that the decisions should be made jointly by both husband and wife; two percent said that the husband should make most decisions; six percent said husbands should make the final decision. One percent differed and said that the wife should make the final decision and there was no response from 17 percent.

Clearly, in Johnson's Crossing, the expressed decision making power follows the equalitarian pattern that seems to be the trend nationally. This information lends additional strength to the studies which suggest that the Black family is not female dominated in terms of power, but like other families is possibly flexible in terms of role and performance. The question of decision making was not probed deeply by the researcher because he assumed that with the strong religious heritage of the community, the patriarchal pattern of the Bible would be more closely followed. Traditionally, rural Black families have been viewed as being more male dominated, but if this equalitarian idea is a reality in Johnson's Crossing, then the rural area has joined the rest of the country in its decision making patterns.

### Interpretation

The researcher would like to acknowledge that these data were not obtained to refute or give credence to the view of Moynihan (1965), Frazier (1957), Billingsley (1968), Hill (1972), or Staples (1978). However, the general picture of family life in Johnson's Crossing seems to be somewhat anomalous to the general expectations of rural Black life.

Moynihan (1965) speaks of the Black family as being in a tangle of pathology, and at the center of that tangle

is the weakness of the family structure. The data show that in Johnson's Crossing, of the 63 households that were typed as families (primary individuals are excluded), 62 percent were headed by two parents. This is distinctly more than the 54.9 percent reported for 1979 (Current Population Reports, 1980). Thirty percent of these families are female-headed which is lower than the 40.5 percent reported in the same source. In the community as a whole, there is strong family identification and relationships which tend to keep the families together. Of the 24 single-parent families, fourteen are the result of divorce or separations. The rest are due to the death of the spouse. There appears to be a strength in these families that seems to defy the national trend seen in America today. The trend in Johnson's Crossing does not seem to be toward divorce.

It might possibly be mere coincidence that the 24 families, rendered single-parent either by divorce or by death, contain a few more children than to the 27 two-parent households. (The mean for the single-parent household is 2.5 children per household; the comparable figure for the two-parent households is 1.96.) Given the small N's involved, and the absence of (1) careful standardization by age of head of household, (2) detailed interview data on the timing of residence in Johnson's Crossing, and (3) data on the date of mate loss, one can make no more of this difference than to suggest the possibility that Johnson's Crossing

may serve as something of a retreat to persons who lose the marital partner by death or divorce. In future research on comparable rural Black communities, the needed information might be obtained to determine if some process of "going back home" to the community does occur when the stated conditions are all present.

Frazier (1957) says that ". . . disorganization . . . has affected practically every phase of their community life adjustments to the larger society, but the residents seem to have adapted to whatever conditions that affect their lives and life styles." The disorganization that Frazier speaks of is not particularly apparent in this community. When the school closed years ago, it did not upset much of the population. The bus rides and getting up early in the morning is accepted rather nonchalantly. As a matter of fact, the youngsters seem to enjoy riding the buses each day, contrary to many of the communities in the U.S.

The Black family structure as described by Billingsley (1968) is applicable to this community although his augmented typology does not apply in its strictest sense, perhaps because this area has so little to attract transients or "outsiders." Since most residents own their land, there is not much of a tendency for relatives and others to share households.

Hill (1972) emphasized the strengths of the Black family rather than focusing upon its weaknesses. This research

clearly shows that strong kinship bonds affect the daily lives of the residents of this community. Based on the educational achievements of most of the people, it can be said that they are achievement oriented. One would think that education would not be such an important institution for a rural Black community, but Johnson's Crossing seems to have made it a priority. Normally, it is not unusual to see boys of high school age "skipping" school during the day and gathering where the adult men gather. Johnson's Crossing seemed to be an exception. During the researcher's stay in the community, only one young man was seen consistently out of school. His name was "Reb" and everyone knew that he was not going to school. When he did go, it was simply to have fun. The men who gathered at the tree often chided him for not being in school.

There is also strong work orientation noted in this community. The fact that there are very limited job opportunities in the area is not apparent when one notices an absence of men under the tree during the work hours. Most of the workers travel as far as 48 miles each day in order to work. When the day is over, they return to their own community in order to socialize. Most of the men of the area who are not working are retired and even then, they can be seen working in their small garden plots. The people usually frown on a man who does not work. As can be seen by the data on public assistance, these are a proud people and



they do not want governmental aid. They would rather fend for themselves because it is degrading to seek help from outside the family.

Staples (1978) seems to express what these people feel about life. He says, "the problems Black people face have been essentially the same for a century." The people of Johnson's Crossing are saying that life has to go on no matter what the changes in society. They seem to be where the rest of the nation is trying to get in terms of family size. The data suggest that 60 percent of White female college graduates and 65 percent of Black college graduates expect to have one or more children during their lifetime. In Johnson's Crossing, this is a reality. They average 1.5 children per household if one divides the total number of children by the total number of households. It is a fact that most of the citizens of this community only want small families. One can speculate that the job market may be a contributing factor in the decisions to have few children, but whatever the reason, the fertility rate is obviously low.

Sixty-eight percent of the families reported that they owned or were buying their homes. This is due, in large part because most of the land has been in the hands of the families for more than a hundred years. There is a strong desire to hold onto it as long as possible. The fact that 44 percent of the population had lived in the community all



of their lives, would suggest that they had to have some kind of "roots" in the community. A few years ago, some landowners on the north side of Lake Cowpen sold some of the land south of the lake. There are whispers in the community today about these Black people who let the White man outsmart them for their land. Today, the people are more cognizant of the fact that land is more valuable the longer you can hold onto it, and they are keeping it.

On decision making within the family unit, these families are following the national trend of equalitarianism. They seem to have the best of two worlds. They are living in the rural areas but have all of the benefits and pitfalls of urbanism. However, the area is going to have to change. It cannot survive the onslaught of urbanism for very much longer. The rapid growth of the city of Gainesville is going to cause the landrush and traffic problems found in other metropolitan areas of the country. The researcher feels that within the next ten years, the community will have lost that rustic and placid appearance that it has maintained for all of these years. The ideal of the community about remaining small and holding onto the land will vanish and, with these ideals, a part of the heritage that is found in Black rural communities like Johnson's Crossing will be lost.

### Religion

Religion has traditionally been spoken of as a vital element in the life of the Black American. Having been denied the opportunity to participate equally in the religious life of the larger society, Blacks, as a means of coping, organized their own religious denominations (Frazier, 1949; Smythe, 1976).

The first organized Black church in America, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, was begun in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as a direct result of violence by the White membership in 1787 (Smythe, 1976). Richard Allen, who had been allowed to preach to Black parishioners periodically, and Absalom Jones walked out of St. George Methodist church to form the African Free Society. As a result, Richard Allen who had been ordained by Bishop Asbury, became the first Black Bishop of the A.M.E. church in America. Absalom Jones choose to become ordained in the Episcopal church and in 1794, became pastor of St. Thomas Episcopal Church.

Herskovits (1941, Chapter 7) suggests that it is in their religion that some elements of African heritage are to be found. The act of performing while delivering the sermon is typical of many groups in West Africa. This trait can be found in many preachers of the old South.

Pinkney (1969, p. 115) says ". . . the rural church is perhaps the outstanding social institution among rural Negroes. It serves as a means of escape from the harsh lives they lead. It is the medium through which the community maintains its social cohesion." This statement is no less true for the community of Johnson's Crossing.

If one can accept the definition of Herberg (1960, p. 39) that "a religious community may be evidenced simply by widespread self-identification and self-location rooted in a common religious heritage, even where such roots now feed a great variety of branches or expressions of the common heritage" (Winter, 1977, p. 266), then Johnson's Crossing constitutes a religious community. Washington (1964, pp. 30-31) says of the folk religion of Blacks, "the folk religion is not an institutional one. It is a spirit which binds Negroes in a way they are not bound to other Americans because of their different histories. . . . This historical folk religion . . . unites all Negroes in a brotherhood which takes precedence over their individual patterns for the worship of God, or lack thereof." In the community presently under study, the Blacks seem determined to identify spiritually with each other, inside and outside of the church. This feeling is expressed in the support for all of the churches whether one is a member or non-member.

Most of the residents of Johnson's Crossing say that they are members of an organized church. This study shows

that among the adult population, 76 percent (65) of the population belongs to a church. This is far above the national average for Black Baptist Church membership which is approximately 42 percent. Twenty-one percent of the residents expressed no church affiliation. Table 5 shows statistics for Baptist Membership in America.

In Johnson's Crossing the majority of the adults could be considered established church members. The modal number of years in attendance for this group is 0-10 years. Computations based on the replies of the 76 percent of the population who belong to an organized church show that 33 percent had attended for less than 10 years; five percent 11 to 20 years; seven percent 21 to 30 years; 14 percent 31 years and more, while 16 percent simply replied that they had attended church throughout their entire lifetime.

Traditionally, rural Black church attendance is greatest on the first Sunday of each month. In most Black churches, this is usually the day that Holy Communion Service is held. Johnson's Crossing proved to be no deviation from this pattern. The most frequent response to the question of church attendance was once a month, with twenty-seven people (32 percent) checking this response. It was found that those respondents who said once a month were referring to the church in which they hold membership. Since two of the churches held service only once per month this seems to be justifiable reply.

Nineteen of the respondents (22 percent) said that they attended church every Sunday. These persons are the ones

Table 5. Black Baptist Denominations in the United States, 1972.\*

Denominations	Number of Members	Number of Churches	Number of Pastors	Sunday School Members
National Baptist Convention USA	5,600,000	26,000	27,500	2,407,000
National Baptist Convention of America	2,750,000	11,398	7,598	500,000
Progressive National Baptist Convention	521,692	655	863	N/A

N/A - Not available.

\*Based on reported figures in the Yearbook of American Churches, 1972, published by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., New York, N.Y.

who support all of the community churches. They also are the ones who serve on the various committees and boards of each church. Eleven (13 percent) of the respondents replied that they attend church more than once each week, which suggests that they take part in the prayer services, usher boards, and/or choir meetings that are held at the various churches. Eight of the respondents replied that they attend church only on special occasions.

Based on the data about church attendance, it was found that at least 57 percent of the adult residents of Johnson' Crossing were in regular church attendance. As was shown in Chapter III, there are three recognized churches in the community. A fourth church is, in reality, the home of a resident. Mount Bethel Baptist, also called Oak Grove, is the church in the center of the community and as such, receives the greatest amount of attendance. Twenty-six percent of the residents attend regularly. Magnolia Baptist, the next church closest to the community, receives 24 percent of the residents' attention. Gilgal, the oldest of the churches and the one farthest away, is attended by 19 percent of the local residents. However, as was stated in an earlier chapter, former members and friends come from other cities to attend services on the third Sunday. For these returnees, they identify with a heritage. Winter (1977) says ". . . the existence of a Black religious community may well have survived the migration of Blacks



from rural areas to the urban centers of the North and South." Johnson's Crossing has survived because the people tend to return to their community.

Frazier (1957, p. 217) says, "the Negro church not only provides the most important means of community expression but it enlists the deepest loyalties of the Negro." In answer to the question, "has the church been of help to you?" the most frequent response was "no" (44 percent). If this was to be taken figuratively, one could say that the loyalties of the people were not to the church. However the "no" responses were mainly on the question of help of a religious nature. Many felt that the church was not able to give any more spiritual help than they could receive on their own. Johnston (1954) says, "the church is not the regulator of moral standards that it was formerly. Instead of looking to the church to formulate principles of action, the individual looks within or without to some other agency than the church." There is not that reliance on the church and religious leaders in Johnson's Crossing today as there was in earlier years. Of those who responded "yes" to the question, most felt that the church was providing help in ways other than spiritual. Among these other forms of assistance were (1) offering guides to the living, (2) helping the sick, (3) sending money, (4) service, (5) helping overcome family problems, (6) fellowship, (7) personal counseling, and (8) giving one peace of mind.

Thirty-seven percent gave responses that might be of a religious content.

The residents of Johnson's Crossing feel that it is in the church that they have the greatest amount of control. It is the one institution that is not controlled by the larger society. Johnson (1934, p. 150) summarizes the role of the rural Black church by saying, "the church is the most important center for face-to-face relations. It provides . . . recreation and relaxation. . . . It is the agency which holds together the subcommunities and families physically scattered over a wide area." The people feel that whatever they do in their churches, they have the power to do. Whether it be political forums, raffles, or planning trips for the community, they have the final word. The church in the center of the community is an activist one. Marx (1969) reached the conclusion that the religion of Black people in this country serves largely as an opiate, producing other worldly attention and showing little interest in social change. Mount Bethel Baptist Church at Edgars would not fit that description. It is definitely a church that is becoming more concerned with the living than with the dying.

The people of Johnson's Crossing regard themselves as members of a religious community. The researcher will not attempt to argue Herberg's (1960) three community hypothesis as it relates on a national scale. However, for this

small community and its residents, the view of Winter (1977, p. 284) must be considered: ". . . the dynamic, adaptive quality of (the) religious community must be stressed. Religious community is an adaptation to the conditions of American society . . . evidence refering to Blacks . . . is compatible with the claim that Blacks have long constituted a religious community."

### Politics

Immediately following the Reconstruction period in the United States, Blacks in the South began to lose the right to vote. Some that did try to vote did so under the threat of bodily harm or death. By 1876, Blacks were successfully disenfranchised in Putnam County. No Blacks held elected office and were denied opportunity until recent years. Therefore, as a political force, the Blacks of Putnam County, and Johnson's Crossing in particular, had no effective voice.

In 1972 the active participation of Blacks politically began to increase in Johnson's Crossing. A former resident of the community who had been away for more than 25 years and had been active in civil rights, returned to the community. After seeing that her neighbors were not politically active, she undertook the task of registering people to vote. In Districts 17 and 18, Mrs. M\_\_\_\_\_ registered more than 700 people and became the district chairman of the Democratic

party for the area. Since early 70's, Blacks have been more active in the West Putnam County area.

When asked if they were registered voters in the county, sixty-nine (81 percent) of the respondents in the survey responded yes. Fourteen (16 percent) were not registered, and there was no response from two (2 percent).

To the question "which district do you vote in," there was no response from sixteen (19 percent) of the people. The researcher believes that this is due, in part, to the fact that many Blacks are still driven or carried to the polls by workers who look at their registration cards and simply deliver them to the appropriate center. Some are still not literate enough to worry about or question such a mundane issue as voting districts. Forty-four of the respondents (64 percent) are registered in district 17; thirteen (15 percent) are in district 18; eleven (16 percent) vote in district 5; one respondent replied "this one" (meaning district 17).

The research found that the overwhelming majority of those registered are following the choice of Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy. Seventy-one of those registered belong to the Democratic party and there are no Republicans. One respondent replied that he is an Independent, but he still votes in another county.

Sixty-one persons (72 percent) responded yes to the question, "do you vote in local or county elections."

Seven persons (8 percent) replied "no" to the question and seventeen (20 percent) gave no response.

When asked if they voted in the last presidential election, fifty-eight (68 percent) replied "yes" and fifteen (18 percent) replied "no." Twelve persons (14 percent) gave no response to the question.

The researcher wanted to know if the community was aware of those persons who worked actively for them in the political arena. The respondents were asked to name three (3) persons in the community who were politically active. Given three choices, they overwhelmingly chose Mrs. Fannie Williams (40 percent of the time). A few other names were mentioned, but they received less than five percent of the choices, so they are not considered significant for this report.

When asked to name the one person in the community to be approached when there are questions about government, food stamps, politics, welfare, social security or other aid, the greatest number of respondents answered Fannie Williams (32 percent). The respondents named Irene Walker (29 percent of the time) as well as Napoleon Strickland (14 percent of the time).

There was a concern about where these citizens went to receive the social services listed above. Since many still received their mail through the Alachua County Postal Service, it was felt that they may come to Gainesville. To

the question "to which city or town would you go when you need these services performed for you," sixty-eight (80 percent) responded Palatka. Putnam County was the choice of one person and two responded "no where." Only six (7 percent) of the respondents listed Gainesville. Interestingly enough, all of the persons listing Gainesville, worked in that city. There was no response from eight people (9 percent).

The researcher wanted to know how the community felt about the local elected officials and whether these officials seemed concerned about them as people. The question was asked, "do you think that your county elected officials are concerned about your welfare." The majority, forty-seven percent (40) said no, while seventeen percent (14) replied "yes." Thirty-six percent (31) gave no response.

In Johnson's Crossing there are no locally elected officers of the law. There are no police in the immediate area. However, there is an absence of major crimes (murder, rape, looting, arson, etc.). The few times that these kinds of crimes have occurred, the Sheriff's Department from either Alachua or Putnam County has responded. However, it usually takes 30 minutes to an hour or more for these officers to respond. Therefore, when disputes of any kind arise, the community polices itself. They try to solve their problems within the families that live there. Years ago, the postmaster of Carlton, a Black man, served unofficially as the judge for family disputes in the area. Since the death of



"Judge Monroe," there has been no one else assuming his role. This information was volunteered by his daughter Irene Walker.

### Education

There are no formal educational institutions in Johnson's Crossing with the exception of the Westside Daycare Center. The last public school there was Oak Grove Elementary, and it closed in 1954. The children are bused to school in the neighboring cities of Melrose, Interlachen, and Hawthorne. Recently, however, the Alachua County School Board has limited the number of students crossing county lines to attend the schools in Hawthorne. At this writing, the children of elementary age attend Melrose schools, and the high school is in Interlachen. Still, there is great emphasis in the community on school attendance.

Billingsley (1968, p. 79) says "throughout the decades of this century, education has been the single most effective means whereby Blacks have been able to assuage the effects of white economic discrimination and to attain social mobility." This statement holds true for the residents of Johnson's Crossing. Because there are no schools, one might expect education to be a low priority among these rural people. Yet more than 66 percent of the respondents have

completed high school with many pursuing additional education (see Table 6). Three residents chose not to respond to this item.

To the question, "have you seen any changes since the Supreme Court Decision of 1954," the majority of those responding to the question replied "no" (48 percent). Thirty-five respondents (41 percent) said that they had seen changes. There was no response from nine of the individuals.

When asked what changes they had observed, the greatest response was (1) better education for Blacks, (2) integration, and (3) better equipment and facilities. There were a number of other changes listed but neither received more than one observation, therefore, they are not listed.

Observing that there was no school in the community, the researcher wanted to know if the residents thought that this hurt the community, and if so, how did it hurt. Twenty-five percent of the respondents replied that it hurt, but the greater number, sixty-one percent, felt that the community was not affected. Fourteen percent gave no response to the question. There was limited response to the question "how did it hurt," but the greatest amount of response was that children "get up too early and get home too late" (6 percent of those responding). Five percent merely responded that it created a lack of community school identification. Two percent replied teacher discrimination.

Table 6. Years of Schooling Completed for Johnson's Crossing Residents.

	Elementary 1-6	Junior High 7-9	Senior High 10-12	College 1-2	College 3-4	Post BA/BS	Trade 1-2
Number	11	14	44	2	6	3	2
Percent	13%	17%	52%	2%	7%	3%	2%

The question was asked, "do you think that the old school that was in the community did a better job of educating your children?" Two percent said that there was never a school in the community, forty-six percent said yes and forty-four percent said no. Eight percent gave no response.

The researcher wanted to know if the respondents thought that the White teachers were doing a better job of educating the children than the Black teachers, whether they were doing just as good a job, or whether it was worse. On this issue, most of the households responded even if they did not have children in schools. Forty-four percent replied "no" to the question and nine percent replied, "yes" they were doing a better job. Only one household expressed that they had no children in school, and there was no response from six households.

When asked if they thought the White teacher showed a genuine concern for the children, the responses were very closely divided. Twenty-six percent replied "yes" the teachers were concerned but twenty-five percent replied "no" they were not concerned. The researcher expected the overwhelming majority would reply no to the question. Eight residents gave no response to the question, and one said they had no children. Table 7 reveals the attitude about the teachers' concern, and it reflects the opinion of the 76 respondents who answered the item.

Table 7. Perceptions of White Teacher Attitudes Concerning Black Children.

	Yes - Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Very Little Concerned	No - Not Concerned	Total
Number	20	21	12	19	76
Percentage	26%	27%	21%	25%	99%

The final question asked was, "would you prefer your child to be taught by a White teacher, Black teacher, or it doesn't make any difference?" The researcher expected the answers to be a favorable count for the Black teacher preference. However, only nineteen percent preferred a Black teacher, one expressed a White teacher preference, and seventy-eight percent replied that it didn't make any difference. There was no response from four percent.

#### Occupation and Economics

The Urban League in a report entitled "Black Families in the 1974-75 Depression" gave a statistical portrait of current changes in family life which Black families are undergoing. The following statistics were cited:

- Twenty-one percent of all Black families can now be classified as middle income compared with 25 percent in 1973. Approximately 47 percent of White families are classified as middle income.
- An estimated 58 percent of Black families earn less than the \$9,198 needed to maintain the Bureau of Labor Statistics lowest standard of living.

These statistics seem to be appropriate even in the area presently under study. Although the community is rural, the residents are not engaged in farming occupations. Most of



the adults work or have worked in the surrounding cities or municipalities.

When asked if they were employed, 45 percent of the population responded yes and 34 percent answered no. Nineteen percent of the people were retired and two percent did not respond.

A second part of this question asked "if employed, where do you work?" Of the 38 who were employed, Gainesville provided for 13, and areas outside of Johnson's Crossing but within Putnam County, provided jobs for seven. Six people gave no place of work but two did say they did odd jobs.

The third part of the question asked about the nature of their jobs. Ten were employed in professional positions such as forest ranger, teacher, nurse, cook, social worker, and supervisor(?). The other jobs could be classified as service or common labor positions. Once again, for 53 percent of the total population, this question was not applicable.

The researcher then sought to ascertain the income level of the respondents. This is an area that usually gets negative responses from Black people. Fifty-five percent, however, did allow the researcher to probe into this area. Thirty-one percent of the respondents replied that they made less than \$1,000 per year, but 49 percent made less than \$5,999. Clearly, this is far less than the \$9,198 figure suggested

by the Urban League as the figure to support the lowest standard of living for a family of four (see Table 8).

In the household reporting yearly income of over \$15,000, both adults are social workers with the State of Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services; one in Palatka and one in Gainesville. Of the two households reporting incomes between \$11,000 and \$14,999, one was composed of two school teachers and the other of two cottage parents, both working at Sunland Teaching Center in Gainesville.

### General

Under the heading, General, the researcher wanted to get at attitudes of the respondents on various issues of concern in the Johnson's community. Questions, both open-ended and close-ended, were used in order for the respondents to more freely express themselves if they so desired.

One of the questions asked if relationships between Blacks and Whites had changed. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents replied yes, there were changes, and 49 percent replied no, there were no changes. Twenty-two percent did not respond. There were few answers to the second part of the question, how had they changed. Of those respondents who replied yes, 17 percent said that there were better human

Table 8. Income of Households in Johnson's Crossing.

	0 to \$999	\$1,000 to \$1,999	\$2,000 to \$2,999	\$3,000 to \$3,999	\$4,000 to \$4,999	\$5,000 to \$5,999	\$6,000 to \$10,999	\$11,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 and more
Total Number	26	9	2	1	3	-0-	3	2	1
Percent	31%	11%	2%	1%	4%	-0-	4%	2%	1%

relations since the Sixties, and eight percent said that there was more humane treatment of Blacks.

Another inquiry suggested that, based on history, Blacks had controlled a large amount of land in the area. The question was asked, "what happened to it?" Did the Blacks die out, was it taken by Whites, were the Blacks forced to sell to Whites, or did they sell voluntarily? Five percent responded that the Black land owners had simply died out. Forty-seven percent said that the Whites took the land away from the Blacks. Nine percent said the Blacks were forced to sell the land, but 35 percent said that they sold it voluntarily. Two percent were unsure and one gave no response.

The researcher wanted to know if the respondents felt that they could be fairly hired by agencies outside of their own community, and if not, why not. Fifty-one percent felt that they would be given a fair chance at being hired, but 32 percent said that they would not get fair treatment. Eighteen percent did not respond to the question. Of those responding "no" to the question, the reasons given were:

(1) discrimination (26 percent), (2) they say they'll call but never do (7 percent), (3) less pay for equal work (4 percent), (4) distance from jobs (4 percent), and (5) people blocking you (4 percent).

The next inquiry sought the reasons for not being hired outside of the community. Three items were suggested:

(1) being from a different town, (2) being a Black person, and (3) employers want people who are close at hand.

Thirty-one percent felt that they were discriminated against because they were from a different town, 24 percent responded "no," and 46 percent gave no response. Fifty-three percent felt they were discriminated against because they were Black, 21 percent responded "no," and 26 percent gave no response. Thirty-nine percent felt that employers wanted someone who was close at hand, 11 percent said "no," and 51 percent gave no response.

Another question asked if the respondents felt that they were given an equal opportunity at being promoted on their jobs. Fifty-two percent replied yes, 26 percent replied no, and 22 percent did not respond.

Asked if they felt that Blacks who lived in town have a better chance at being hired if they are both seeking the same job, 31 percent responded yes, but 62 percent said no. Seven percent did not respond.

A question about attitude toward outsiders coming to the community was asked. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents replied that they didn't mind talking to them, nine percent said they would be suspicious, and only two percent said that they wouldn't care to talk. (This seemed surprising to the researcher in view of the fact that it took so long for the people to respond to his initial inquiries.)

The issue was raised about advice for young married couples who were making a choice of remaining in Johnson's

Crossing or going elsewhere to live. Only 24 percent felt that the young couple should remain, and gave as reasons (1) making the community a bigger and better place to live, (2) stay where the family is, and (3) things are the same here as elsewhere. Forty-eight percent would tell a young couple to leave and gave as reasons (1) get away from the family, (2) go where the jobs are because there is nothing to do here, and (3) go for self improvement and better opportunities. There was no response from 28 percent.

The final question asked, "what factors do you consider important in keeping this community together?" The respondents listed jobs in the area and chances for growth as the first choice (67 percent). Families and churches was the second choice (55 percent), followed by community organizations (53 percent) and local educational opportunities (38 percent).

#### Impressions Based on Participant Observation

Johnson's Crossing, as it was viewed during this study, seemed to be a "stable" community. It was stable in the sense that the residents seemed satisfied with their community and didn't want it to change. The fact that they lived in a small community which they termed "quiet," and was also close enough to a large city which afforded them urban facilities, was appealing to many.



The researcher observed that many of the families of Johnson's Crossing were related. This observation and the fact that many residents owned land in the community, is important in understanding part of the reason why there is little out-migration of the residents. The closeness of the family seemed very important to much of the population. It was the family that held the community together.

In addition to family, the church seemed to play an important role in the life of the community. For many, the church was the only social outlet. Therefore, they devoted much of their time to church attendance and church related matters. The older citizens were most active in activities of the church. It was here that many of them obtained status in the community. The church afforded some residents the opportunity, for the first time, to assume leadership roles.

The church also seemed to give the people a means of coping with everyday or worldly problems. It was not uncommon to hear the song "take your burdens to the Lord and leave them there" sung on Sunday. The congregation would sing it long enough for someone to "feel the spirit" and then spontaneously, people would shout, clap their hands, or cry. Their burdens would be left at the church and in the hands of the Lord, if only for a short while. For many the church served the same purpose as the psychiatrist. The minister was not that important for counseling, but he set the tone for the "cleansing of the souls." On several occasions it

was observed that people would shout and when the shouting was over, the participants would remain on the floor and "give witness" or testify to the goodness of the Lord. They would tell of their troubles and ask that the church pray for them. After the testifying, someone would introduce another song, one with a lower emotion-raising quality. This tended to settle the people down. After service one could easily get the impression that for some people, this truly was time when they "left their burdens to the Lord."

It did not take a trained observer to notice that there were very limited economic resources in the community. It was easy to see that there was little if any farming being done by the residents. There were no businesses large enough to employ more than five people and no factories or industries. Clearly if people were to work, they would have to seek employment elsewhere.

Of the people who would be under the tree and not working, some were retired, some were unable to work, and others only worked occasionally. The lack of job opportunities in Johnson's Crossing didn't seem to bother anyone. The ones that wanted to work talked as though they could get a job anytime they chose to do so. Some felt that if all else failed, they could get jobs at the University of Florida. The pay would not be the best, but when hard times came along, they could work there until something better came their way.

Education of Johnson's Crossing's youth seemed to be a priority among most of the families but no one seemed to mind not having a school in their community. There were two high schools within ten miles of the community and an elementary school within seven miles. The children, although they had to get up early, didn't seem to mind the bus rides everyday. There were no observable negative reactions on the part of the students or parents to the "busing" of these youth.

Some of the residents of the area were students at the University of Florida. Three of the students lived on campus but there were others who commuted everyday. The local community colleges were also educational institutions which offered opportunities to Johnson's Crossing's citizens.

The political institution was a new phenomena in the minds of some of the Johnson's Crossing population. The political climate gave rise to the establishing of social groups such as the Senior Citizens and the Voters League. These groups got together periodically to listen to and voice their opinions about political candidates.

The researcher observed one leader setting up meetings, getting people to attend, and leading in the discussion of issues. This leader took it upon herself to see that her community got much of the social services that were provided by the county. She would take the time to drive residents to the local social service agencies and the Doctor's offices.

This is the same leader who got Blacks to register in large numbers during the '70's. This leader is one of the most respected persons in the county and as such, has become a strong political force. When local politicians want to visit the community they usually get in touch with her to arrange their visits.

Law enforcement officials are rarely needed in this community. During the time that the researcher was observing, only once did he see an official law enforcement officer. Domestic squabbles were the complaints that were most discussed. However, these problems were usually handled by the families in the area. Violent crimes were rare. When they did occur, the community joined in the effort to apprehend the criminal.

The five institutions studied by the observer were present in Johnson's Crossing although the impact of a few was minimal. It was observed that any shortage of institutional impact did not seem to affect the activities of the people. They found ways to cope with these shortages and maintain the concept of a community.

## CHAPTER VI SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This research is an attempt to access the impact of five societal institutions upon the residents of a rural Black community in northeast Florida. The five institutions, family, religion, education, economics, and politics must be present and, according to Warren (1963), interact with each other in order to have a community. In Johnson's Crossing, each of the institutions is present although they affect the life styles of the population in varying degrees.

The term community is not easy to understand and sociologists have no specific meaning for the concept. George A. Hillery (1955) studied 94 definitions for community and found that three major elements enter into most of these sociological definitions: (1) geographical location, (2) social interaction, and (3) common ties. If Hillery is correct, it may also be said that these elements can be found in a neighborhood. What is the difference? Hillery (1968) answers this by saying, "a neighborhood is defined as a system containing the foci of a vill (community) but lacking certain of the components. However, it is not yet possible to identify the specific components that can be lacking and still accompany an existing system . . . the foci of family, cooperation and space, however, must be present."

The researcher chose to take Warren's concept of community and look at the five societal institutions. The point must be made, however, that Johnson's Crossing has no political existence and at present, rather slight educational identity. For many years it has had very limited economic activity. When one purchases goods, it is done outside of the community. Almost everyone that is employed regularly is employed outside of the community. One might conclude that Johnson's Crossing is something less than the complete community as described by Warren (1963), but in the mind of the residents, it is certainly more than a neighborhood.

In this study, it was found that of the five institutions, the family was the strongest in terms of community impact. The number of respondents that were married, spouse present, was much higher in percentage than the national average for Black families, and the percentage of female-headed households was lower than the national average. The researcher was somewhat surprised to find that 12 percent of those who responded to the question of marital status admitted that they were simply cohabitating. This was usually the kind of activity that was spoken of in whispers in rural areas.

Black families seem to have an extended family network in which persons other than members of the immediate family are included as well as other individuals who are not related by blood or marriage. Billingsley types these kinds of families "augmented." In large measure, these augmented



members are an integral part of an unique arrangement in Black family life. Johnson's Crossing does not have many members who fit in all of the typology of Billingsley, but nevertheless, there are some community members who are very easily typed. The augmented family member is practically unknown in the community because of the low numbers of transients that come into the area. Of the 85 households in the study, only 22 percent had other family members included.

Scanzoni (1971) reported that in his study, the modal number of children was three. When compared with the Johnson's Crossing residents, one would expect a higher number for these rural people. However, the research showed that for Johnson's Crossing, the number was not higher, but lower. Very few families expected to have over three children and when one compares the actual numbers of children to the number of households in the study area, the average is 1.5 children per household.

Families in Johnson's Crossing tend to remain in the community for many years. It was found that 68 percent of those living in the area either owned or were buying their homes. Most had lived in the community for more than four years, and 44 percent had been there all of their lives. Of those respondents who moved away from the area and had since returned, the majority gave as the reason for returning, "to be close to my family."

The study showed that 71 percent of the respondents were born in the county and 64 percent of these were born in Johnson's Crossing. Of these residents, it was found that 67 percent of the parents had owned land in the community. The family orientation was very strong in Johnson's Crossing and the land was a variable which enhanced that orientation. The family and its ties to the land will continue to be the band that draws the people back to Johnson's Crossing.

The church was also an institution that exerted great influence on the lives of the population. The Black Church, the one institution in America that is under the direct control of Blacks, serves a social as well as a religious function for most of the residents of Johnson's Crossing. Seventy-six percent of the adults belong to an organized church in the community and most attend services at least once a month.

There were three organized churches in Johnson's Crossing and the residents attended each on alternate Sundays. Since they were all of the same denomination, it would have been more economical for the three to consolidate. This was not the thinking of the residents. There seems to be a territorial attitude prevailing among the population. This separation tended to keep the membership at each church rather small, but the desire of the residents was to maintain the status quo under any circumstances.

The majority of the residents of this community felt that the church had been of no help to them. Contrary to Frazier (1949), less than 50 percent felt that the church gave them the spiritual fulfillment that they expected. However, many felt that the church provided other services such as helping the sick, sending money, helping with family problems, providing fellowship, and personal counseling.

The church was used as a "coping" mechanism for a great number of people of Johnson's Crossing. Instead of psychiatrists, the people turned to their Pastor and the church. When problems occurred that could not be solved by the family, the minister was the one called upon for help. When all else failed in their lives, the church became a place of last resort. As long as the church existed, the people of Johnson's Crossing felt that they had a place to turn--a place which helps them "cope" with life's circumstances.

Politically, the Blacks were just beginning to realize their potential. After almost a hundred years of being afraid to go to the polls, or having no expressed interest in politics, the residents started registering in large numbers during the years 1974-77. A Black man decided to run for the position of school board member. He was the first from this area of the county to do so. He did not win, but it proved to others that, at last they were free to exercise that freedom that is guaranteed to all free Americans, the right to vote and contend for elective office.

There were no official law enforcement agencies in this community, but the sheriff's department responded whenever called. The families in the community found little need to call in others to help solve their problems. They usually handled the minor problems themselves because many were members of the same family. Unless the community experiences tremendous growth, this should continue to be the pattern for the future.

With the exception of the Community Headstart Program, there were no educational institutions in the immediate area of Johnson's Crossing. The other schools were between seven and eleven miles away, therefore, the people felt that the distance was no great problem. The only complaint noted was that the children had to get up too early. There was, however, great emphasis in the community on school attendance.

The researcher expected education to be a low priority among these rural people. It was found, however, that more than 66 percent of the respondents had completed high school. Of these, 14 percent had attended either college or trade school.

The issue of school desegregation and education was raised by the questionnaire. Most of the residents felt that there had been no changes since the Brown v. Board of Education decision of 1954. The children were bused to former all-white schools in other towns, but 61 percent of the respondents replied that it did not affect the community at all.

Forty-four percent of the respondents felt that the children were not being as well taught by their White instructors as they would have been by Blacks. However, 33 percent felt that they were just as well taught, and nine percent felt that the White teachers did a better job. Twenty-six percent of the respondents felt that the White instructors showed a genuine concern for the Black students and 25 percent felt that they were not concerned. This was a mild surprise to the researcher who anticipated the greatest response would be that there was little concern by the White teachers.

It is the opinion of the researcher that for years to come, the educational institution will be no problem for the population of Johnson's Crossing. The idea of negative racist attitudes shown by White teachers does not permeate the thinking of the Black Community. Education will continue to be emphasized by the residents of this community.

At this writing, 45 percent of the respondents in the study were employed and 19 percent were retired. Of those employed, most worked in the city of Gainesville.

On questions of finance, the majority of respondents did not answer. Of the persons that did respond, however, 31 percent made less than \$1,000 per year. Forty-nine percent made less than the amount that was suggested by the National Urban League as the minimum subsistence level for a family of four.



Incomes for many of the residents were supplemented by having small family gardens and growing a portion of their food. Meat was shared by members of the community when animals were slaughtered. This enabled families to exist at a low level of living and yet maintain a higher standard of living. As long as the residents keep the land, they should not have the economic problems of Blacks in the more urbanized areas.

Generally the people of Johnson's Crossing did not seem to be angry or militant in the determination to right any wrongs, and they felt that nothing but time was going to change the system. They were happy with their lives and wanted their life styles to remain as they were. They knew that discrimination existed on the basis of race in the search for employment, but they were also turned down for employment because of residential location. It was felt also that if a person wanted to work, he would find employment if he wanted it badly enough.

Much of the population of Johnson's Crossing had no negative reaction toward members of other races. They seemed to accept people as they presented themselves. The relationships between the owners of Jackie's Liquors and the patrons seemed genuinely friendly, not superficial. With this kind of attitude, the people of Johnson's Crossing have gained a measure of respect in the political sphere of the county. In the future, with the county having such



a limited number of voters, Johnson's Crossing will play a major role in the politics of the county.

Johnson's Crossing, as a community, was studied because of a dearth of modern studies on small Black Communities. It was felt that the recent legislated and judicially imposed changes in America would have some impact on such communities. If Johnson's Crossing is an example of the national trends, little impact has been felt. Other than developing a greater awareness of the existing societal problems, rural Blacks in this study seem to accept the status quo without pushing for immediate change.

How typical is the community of Johnson's Crossing when compared with other all-Black communities such as are found in Mississippi, Alabama, and Oklahoma? Does this area compare favorably with farming communities or communities where Blacks do not own the land? Much more research needs to be done in order to answer these and many other such questions.

This research was exploratory. Its purpose was to describe the impact of institutions upon the lives of rural Black Americans. Focus was also placed upon the methods used by the subjects in order to cope with society's problems. Very much of Black America is not found in the inner cities of metropolitan areas. This research is an attempt to describe one small segment of that America.

At the time of this writing, other concerns affecting the future of Johnson's Crossing are emerging. If communities like Johnson's Crossing are to retain that quality of life that is referred to as rural, the residents must not allow the land speculators and builders to gain access to the land. This is usually the beginning of "suburban" growth and development, which tends to push out the long time rural independent family. As of this writing there was already discussion in the chambers of the county offices about shopping centers and garment plants in the area of Johnson's Crossing. These plans are discussed with the idea of progress for the area. In this case, progress can be seen as destruction of a long standing way of life for a community of rural Black Americans.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF STUDY AREA

The area of study is a predominantly Black community in West Putnam County. Putnam is a small relatively poor county in Northeast Central Florida. The area was chosen because of its long and somewhat exciting history in a comparatively young state (Florida was admitted to the Union in 1845, and until after World War I (WWI), was the least populous state in the South). The researcher also felt that because of the disenfranchisement of Blacks from the political process in the county (a policy which has already been altered), the attitude about government and change now expressed by this rural Black population would be of interest in reflecting, to whatever degree, their feeling of meaningful participation in the larger communities of the county, state, and nation. In order to understand the people of the selected community, it is necessary to view the history of the total county. This historical background should alert the reader to reasons for attitudinal expressions that are revealed throughout this study.

Putnam County, according to the Florida Statistical Abstract, has a population of 43,660 based on a 1976 population estimate (Thompson, 1977). Of this number, 33,629 are White and the other 10,031 non-white (Blacks, American

Indians, Orientals, etc.). The county is largely rural, with its county seat and largest city, Palatka, having in 1970 a population of 9,444 residents. There are vast numbers of lakes in the county, and these lakes once served as the principal modes for travel throughout the region. The major waterway for the county, however, is the St. Johns River. The recorded history of the region begins with this river.

### Early European Settlers

It should be noted at the beginning of this section that the French-Spanish-British struggle had little connection with Johnson's Crossing of today, but it does show the attempts to settle the area which was considered "hostile" not only to the early natives but to foreigners alike. This "hostile" atmosphere and environment is partly responsible for the lack of growth and shortage of population during the first three centuries of East Florida History.

The first White men to visit Putnam County were the French. In 1564, Laudonniere challenged the claim of the Spanish government to control of East Florida, by establishing a small colony near the mouth of the St. Johns River. Having done so, he began to gain the respect and friendship of his neighbors, the Timucuan Indians. Laudonniere found that two of the Chiefs, Saturiba and Potano, were

bitter enemies of a third, Hotina (Lowery, 1959, p. 412). Hotina lived between his two rivals on the banks of the St. Johns and the Oklawaha Rivers. He averted the French destruction of his village by convincing Laudonniere that he knew where gold could be found in the area. Immediately, the French became Hotina's ally and assisted him in defeating the other two chiefs. Later, when no gold was found, the French realized how shrewd this Indian could be. He later disappointed the French by withdrawing his support when famine threatened the settlement.

In September, 1565, Pedro Menéndez was sent by Phillip II of Spain to end the French presence in Florida. He then proceeded along the coast and founded St. Augustine. Aided by Hotina, Menendez and the Spanish gradually extended their rule throughout Northeast Florida. By 1583, all of the Indian chiefs had surrendered to the rule of the invaders (Swanton, 1922, p. 328). In 1609, Hotina and his heirs, along with many other members of his tribe, were baptized in St. Augustine (Swanton, 1922, p. 334). Thus began a period of stagnation in terms of European growth in East Florida. For more than a hundred years, there appears to be no economic growth in the area. Except as a starting point for further exploration into the New World, Florida was not seen as being very valuable to the Spanish.



### English Settlement

The first attempt to establish a permanent English settlement near Palatka occurred in 1767. Shortly after the British acquired Florida from Spain, Dennys Rolle, father of a member of the British Parliament, was granted 20,000 acres of land in Florida. The land was granted with a stipulation that a colony was to be recruited from the poorer classes of the British people. With 49 persons, Rolle set sail for the New World, intending to settle in an area called St. Marks. Bad weather, however, forced him to land in an area several miles above Palatka. This location he later called "Charlottia" in honor of Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III. Later, the settlement became known as Rollestown. The area, although deserted today, is still called Rollestown (Fleming, 1902, p. 86). Having encountered many difficulties in trying to colonize the area, Rolle's persistence was finally rewarded and by 1782, there were 200 persons in the settlement. These settlers possessed more than \$60,000 worth of cattle and a number of Negro slaves who were used to cultivate the fields. However, when England transferred Florida back to Spain in an exchange agreement, Rolle had to abandon his efforts to maintain a colony in the area. He chartered a few ships and with a majority of the colonists set sail for a small Island in the Bahamas. Along the way, they

encountered a severe storm in which they lost most of their possessions including 45 of their Negro slaves (Dowda, 1939, p. 18).

During this period of time, a survey was started in what later became the Southeastern United States. The official surveyer of the Southern District of America was William Gerard DeBrahm. He began his work on June 26, 1764, and completed it in 1772. In connection with his survey, he also conducted a census. At the time of his poll, he found that 1,188 persons other than Indians resided in East Florida. Of these residents, 288 were White and 900 were Negroes (DeBrahm, 1772, p. 16B).

#### Conflict with the Indians

During the war between the United States and England in 1812-14, British Army Officers inflamed the Indians in Florida with the idea that the Americans wanted to kill them all and seize their lands. Tensions developed between Whites and Indians. Bitter feelings were further intensified by the problem of runaway slaves. The Indians had been harboring these fugitives in spite of the colonists' objections. These Blacks who had been escaping from the cotton plantations of South Carolina and Georgia were welcomed by the Indians and were allowed to marry into the tribes. Periodic raids were made by the settlers into

Indian territory in order to retrieve the escaped Blacks. As a result, hostilities became more intense. The raids, however, were not made by the Whites alone. Indian attacks were frequent. Indian raids were made into both Georgia and Alabama. The attacks and counter attacks finally resulted in major battles between Whites and Indians.

The first Seminole War witnessed the greatest battle between the Indians and the White intruders. The conflict took place near present day Windsor and resulted in the death of one-hundred seventeen men, including the Seminole Chief Payne (for whom Payne's Prairie is named). Colonel Daniel Newman (for whom Newman's Lake is named) led a force comprised mainly of St. Johns Valley residents into the skirmish. In the September 12, 1812, issue of Nile's Register, a visitor to the Valley reported that the home of Zepaniah Kingsley was ". . . handsomely decorated with Indian scalps" (Davis, 1939, p. 26).

A number of small battles occurred during the next few years but nothing as large as the battle at Windsor. It was not too long, however, before the United States Army entered the wars. Several premature forays were made into Spanish Florida by Andrew Jackson. The raids were in retaliation for the Seminole raids into Southern Alabama. Jackson pursued the Indians relentlessly. In November, 1818, he pushed as far as the Pensacola Region but withdraw after a brief stay.

In 1819, the "Treaty of Camp Moultrie," which was the first treaty with the Seminoles, was signed. The Indian territory consisted of five million acres (all of Florida East of the Suwannee River), and the settlers were granted all other lands north and west of the St. Augustine-Pensacola Region. These lines of demarcation proved useless, however, because the Whites were constantly crossing the boundaries and intensifying their pursuit into Indian land in order to capture slaves. The Indians, who were themselves slaveholders, resented these intrusions.

Eighteen nineteen was also the year that the United States (U.S.) acquired Florida by treaty. By 1822, this new acquisition to an ever growing country had organized itself enough to be admitted as a territory in which slavery was held to be legal. However, slaves that were successful in reaching Indian lands usually found sanctuary. Some became slaves of the Indians but many chose this as an alternative to being captured by their former masters. The Act of March 30, 1822, established Civil Government with General Andrew Jackson as Military Commander.

In 1822, it was estimated that there were no less than 4,000 Indians in designated Indian territory in East Florida, one-third of them being Seminole. There were also 300 Black slaves. No Whites were to have settlements in Indian territory. On August 21, 1822, Secretary of War John C. Calhoun instructed local leaders in this area that no grants given by the Spanish for land in the Indian

territory could be settled without Government permission. The Indians were told that no Whites would enter their territory. Still, the Whites entered the land in defiance of Calhoun (Carter, 1956, p. 512). The ground was now laid for further conflict between Indian and White. The Indians began to resist the Whites more actively.

On September 3, 1825, a band of Indians attacked a plantation in the valley area, carrying off both cattle and slaves. After another attack in 1826, the residents petitioned the President to furnish forces to keep the Indians within their borders. Settlers were afraid to enter the area because of constant raids. The military could not function efficiently because of the lack of transportation and supplies. The beginning of another major war became apparent.

After numerous skirmishes between Whites and Indians during the period between 1825-29, Palatka and the surrounding area became a ghost town, deserted and burned. (It was not until the establishment of Fort Shannon in 1838 that the area became alive again (Sprague, 1964, p. 50)).

Little further history of the area was recorded until May 9, 1832, when the Seminoles agreed to the Treaty of Payne's Landing, which was signed at Orange Springs. The Indians were urged by Secretary of War Lewis Cass to move west with the Creek nation across the Mississippi River. The Commissioner of the Government, Colonel James Gadsen,



met with Chief Jumper and six other chiefs. They agreed to look at land in Arkansas to determine if it was suitable enough as a future home for their people.

The agreement stipulated that the Indians were to be moved within three years beginning in 1833, if the land was satisfactory. Jumper and his companions, however, represented considerably less than half the Indians in Florida and could not truly speak for all of the members of the Seminole nation. Although they did not have total authority, they did visit Arkansas. Later, in 1833, they signed the agreement stipulating that they would move there (Littlefield, 1977).

Congress ratified the treaty and decreed that the migration should take place the following year. The other Indians, advised by Jumper, Micanopy, Alligator, and other chiefs, decided that the treaty was not valid because it had not been approved by tribal council. Therefore, they refused to leave their homes. They decided to fight for their ancestral homeland.

In order to dispel the "hostiles," a number of forts were built a short distance from Palatka. During the war, Fort Shannon, which was located in Putnam County, was commanded at some period of time by Generals Winfield Scott, Edmund P. Gaines, Andrew Jackson, Zachary Taylor, Lem J. Worth, and Lieutenant William T. Sherman. All of these names were to become famous in military and political history.



In November, 1836, an Indian Chief, Tustanugee, and one hundred members of his band made an assault on Palatka. Lieutenant Alburtis, with 17 men and arms, made a counter attack. In the process, the Indians were routed, leaving behind three dead and two wounded (Dowda, 1939, p. 23). Many other skirmishes occurred during this time, always with the Indians attacking and retreating to the bush before the troops could gather and inflict any major damage. Blacks who had joined the Indians were also a part of these raiding parties.

On December 29, 1836, Osceola (it has been reported that he had a Black wife) and Alligator devised an attack on General Clinch and two hundred men of the First, Second, and Third Regiments. Two hundred and fifty warriors (of whom thirty were Black) charged this artillery unit on the banks of the Withlacoochee River. Only four regulars were killed but more than forty were wounded, including fifteen volunteers. Only three Indians were killed (Swanson, 1967, p. 86).

In 1837, General Worth decided to put an end to Halec Tustanugee and his constant raiding. He took personal command of the troops and set out from Palatka. After a few days, he found the Indian group at Palatka Swamp, near the present Grove Springs. The Indians were routed but General Worth did not succeed in his original objective--the capture of Tustanugee. Later, however, through means of

deception, he managed to put the elusive red man in irons. He invited Tustanugee to a peace talk and feast. The Chief, being weak from hunger and weary of battle, accepted the gesture. As soon as he and his men arrived at Fort King, which is now Ocala, the host promptly locked them up (Dowda, 1939, p. 24). The Indians were sent to areas west of the Mississippi and general peace was restored to East Florida. Those Indians who did escape, seemed to have settled in the swamp lands bordering and south of Lake Okeechobee.

#### Growth and Expansion

With the exposure of the many, now famous, figures to this part of Central Florida, it became routine for them to visit the Palatka region. The St. Johns River was a principal water route and it allowed for further penetration into central Florida. Many politicians ventured to Palatka for pleasure and profit.

The orange culture was beginning to flourish and become important as in industry in this part of the State. There were, in the Putnam County region, great plantations of cotton and sugar cane. Between 1840 and 1860, cotton produced capital which totaled half the wealth of the State. There was developed a long grain cotton which rivaled the best in the world at that time.

On March 3, 1845, Florida was admitted to the union as a slave state. To keep a balance between slave and free states in the union, Iowa was also admitted at this time as a free state. With the official sanctioning of Florida as a State in which slavery was legal, more slaves were brought into the areas around McMeekin and Johnson. This furthered the expansion of Blacks into the western section of Putnam County.

A census of Putnam County was conducted in 1850. Six-hundred and eighty-seven inhabitants occupied the boundaries. Of this number, 473 were White. There were ten free Blacks and two-hundred and four slaves (Swanson, 1967, p. 140). This became a period of many church "raisings" in the Palatka area.

In the year 1854, a pastor named M.A. Strickland allowed his slave to be baptized in the church of Palatka. Thus, "Beck" was the first Black woman to join the church. Religion was also becoming an important institution in the interior of the county during this period. At Melrose, also known as "Shake-rag," enough people had congregated to form the Eliem Baptist Church. Although organized at the home of Daniel McLoud in 1859, the following year saw the church site moved to the south side of Anaiah Creek at the fort. This is significant because the first pastor was E.B. Timmons. It is accepted that Timmons baptized the five Blacks who organized the first Black church near Johnson's Crossing in 1863. This information was supplied

by Mrs. Julia White who is the official historian of Gilgal Baptist Church. She received the information through oral tradition passed through the years.

In an analysis of the 1860 census, it was found that of a total population of 613 Palatka inhabitants, 147 were White males and 116 were White females. The total White population was 263. A total of 31 free Blacks was indicated, with 19 of these being female. The slave population was listed at 170 males and 149 females, for a total of 319 (Swanson, 1967, p. 157). A total of 350 Blacks resided within the city limits of Palatka, which was the major city of the region. A county figure showed that of the people in Putnam County, Palatka accounted for less than a fourth. There was a total of 2,712 persons residing in the County. There were fewer Blacks living in the outlying areas than Whites. The Whites were numbered as 767 males and 605 females. The Black population was 373 males and 355 females. The breakdown on the number of Mulattoes was not listed. However, all of the free Blacks lived in the town of Palatka (Swanson, 1967, p. 158).

In a comparison of the figures with the 1850 census, it is well to note that the population of Putnam County had nearly quadrupled in the decade before 1860. However, from 1860 to 1870, the growth rate declined. By 1870, the population was only 3,821. The number of slaves did not vary during the period 1850 to 1860 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1864, p. 54ff).

John Francis Tenney

Eighteen fifty-nine saw the coming of John Francis Tenney to Florida. He was a native of New York who came to East Florida to cut timber in the Six Mile Creek region. After he had been in the area for a while, he moved inland for his work and used the labor of slaves who were hired from their masters. He was opposed to the "peculiar institution" and it was demonstrated by his act of paying the slaves for all timber cut in excess of the required task, the usual number being ten trees per day. Needless to say, this did not sit too well with some of the owners because the slaves were able to pocket some of their earnings.

Tenney revealed in his writings a very vivid description of the treatment given to slaves who were dissident. The slave was considered chattel and was allowed very few sentimental ties. When he was punished he was accorded no respect, even in front of his wife and/or family. A hard case was treated in the following manner:

In an out building, he would be stripped naked and his hands and feet would be tied. Then having been thrown on the ground, his arms would be looped over his knees and a stick would be thrust over the wrist and under the back of the knee, rendering the individual a perfectly helpless ball of humanity. The whipping was done by an old slave called the driver, a sort of foreman, wielding a device consisting of a short stick to which was attached a strip of leather usually an inch and a half wide. Twenty lashes was the usual punishment, and the man would be rolled over constantly so as to expose the more tender spots.



Tenney contended that slaves were not frequently bought and sold at the slave market in St. Augustine, as some historians reveal. More often, they were hired out due to the high cost of purchasing a slave. A prime worker cost one-hundred dollars or more. Tenney maintained that if the subject (slavery) could have been treated in a proper spirit, slavery could have been abolished in this country without the terrible war of secession (Tenney, 1934, p. 14).

### The War Years

The Florida Secession Committee met in Tallahassee on January 3, 1861. After seven days of intensive debate, the secessionist ordinance was passed (Wooten, 1968). James Duval of Putnam County, who owned twenty-five slaves with a value of \$35,000, campaigned heavily for and voted in favor of secession (U.S. - The War of the Rebellion, 1880, p. 333).

The initial involvement of Putnam County in the war came on May 1, 1861. A company of men was organized by J.W. Stark and was encamped at Fort Number 10 which was located six miles below Palatka. Stark's plantation was also located in the area, being near Fish Creek in the vicinity of Russell's Point.

The St. Johns River was an important artery for transportation during the early part of the war. However, after



1862, there was very little activity on the river. This was due, in part, to the Federal control that was exercised after the realization of the river's potential usefulness during 1861. Early in the war, steamboats ran the river in an attempt to dislodge the Federal who had instituted a blockade.

The Navy was the most active force in the valley during the early part of 1862. The achievements of these "invaders" caused great fear among the residents of the area. President Lincoln, on July 2, 1862, issued General Order Number 10. It instructed all Military Commanders of forces operating in the Southern part of the United States to ". . . seize and use any property, real or personal, which may be necessary or convenient for their several commands as supplies or for other military purposes" (U.S. - The War of the Rebellion, 1899, p. 397). The order also directed the Union forces to employ as many Blacks as they were able to find, to help in these operations.

A most important figure for the Confederacy and eventual "resettling" of slaves into the interior sections of Putnam County was John J. Dickison. In 1856, Dickison settled at a place called Orange Lake which was in Marion County. The 1860 census showed that he was worth an excess of \$26,000, a tidy sum for that period.

In 1861, the Marion Light Artillery Company was organized with Captain John Martain as the commanding officer and John Dickison as one of the Lieutenants. In May, 1862,

Dickison resigned and formed his own company of Calvary. Men from all over Northeast Florida (Alachua, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Hillsborough, Madison, Marion, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Sumter, and Volusia Counties) joined Dickison (Swanson, 1967, p. 174). This diversified group had great difficulty in getting organized. Under Dickison's capable leadership, the men were finally disciplined into a fighting outfit. The unit was then ordered to Jacksonville to help defend that city. After a short stay, they were pulled back to Palatka. There, they assumed the role of guerillas, living off the land. They relied heavily on military raids in order to replenish their diminished stores (Swanson, 1967, p. 174).

One of Dickison's first orders was to remove all slaves who were not in the company of their owners, to the interior of the County. This order was also imposed on all free Blacks. Its effect was to place the Blacks out of reach of the repeated Federal Naval forays on the St. Johns River (U.S. - The War of the Rebellion, 1880, p. 661).

On March 20, 1863, Dickison's concern over the presence of Blacks was heightened. There was a battle on the St. Johns River, and for the first time Dickison and his men faced Black troops. After a brief battle, Dickison and his forces retreated. The Federal soldiers and sailors moved from the St. Johns River toward Orange Mills from whence they had come the previous night. More than 80 Black troops, commanded by White officers, accompanied this

force. During this time, the slaveowners had taken to hiding their slaves because they did not want them joining the Federal troops or becoming free men.

On a return trip from Orange Mills to Palatka following one of the battles, the Federal troops stopped off at the Dupont Plantation and demanded the slaves who had been hidden. The officers stated that if the slaves were not immediately delivered, the houses would be burned to cinders. Mrs. Dupont, being alone at the time, became greatly alarmed. According to reports, she delivered the slaves despite their pleas and against their will (U.S. - The War of the Rebellion, 1880, p. 861).

There were Federal troops, including Blacks, in the Putnam Region and all along the St. Johns River during March of 1864. On the 10th of March, the First Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers, with Colonel T.W. Higginson in command, landed and occupied Jacksonville. He was joined in this venture by the Second North Carolina Volunteers, commanded by Colonel James Montgomery. This disgraceful use of Black troops by Union forces prompted Brigadier General Horace Saxton to draft a letter on March 14, to Edward Stanton, the United States Secretary of War. The letter read, in part, "It is my belief that scarcely an incident in this war has caused a greater panic throughout the whole southern coast than this raid of Colored troops in Florida" (U.S. - War of the Rebellion, 1880, p. 226).

On April 3, 1964, the Third Colored Army was employed to build fortified earthworks sufficient enough to accomodate 300 troops. The order stipulated that the patrols were to venture as far west as Orange Creek and if no Confederates were encountered, to proceed north to Silver Springs. Patrols were to consist of no less than 15 men whose orders were to "collect all Negroes and slaughter all beef" (U.S. - The War of the Rebellion, 1880, p. 194).

The second skirmish at Palatka occurred in August of 1864. In a report dated August 4, Brigadier General John P. Hatcher wrote Major General J.G. Foster, who was commanding the Department of the South. The report stated that the Eighth United States Colored Army arrived in Palatka just in time to prevent the capture of a 25-man picket which had been driven to the trenches by a Confederate calvary force.

It is obvious from these accounts of the war that Blacks played a major role in the struggle. However, their participation in the effort stirred up ill feelings, the effects of which can be seen in some parts of Putnam County today. This will be touched upon at a later time.

The Confederate surrender occurred in Florida on May 10, 1865, appropriately enough, in Tallahassee where the Confederate era in the South started. The dream of the Confederacy had failed, the issue was settled. The Union mark had been made, even to the burying of ten Federal troops in the cemetery north of Johnson.

Although Palatka had been deserted for most of the war, it still played a major role in operations along the St. Johns River. Palatka was the hub from which many other cities and communities branched in Putnam County. The war itself, which caused many of the Blacks, both slave and free, to be located in areas west of the city, was the instrument by which these Blacks came to live in such later named communities as Florahome, Johnson, McMeekin, Melrose (Shake-rag), and Orange Heights. When the conflict was ended, many of the residents chose to return to Palatka. Others, including slave-owners, chose to remain in the outlying area in west Putnam County. Many of the Blacks that had been freed and a few who had been free before the war, also chose to settle in the western part of the county.

Because the land was marshy and contained many lakes and swamps, it was not easily accessible to the outside world. Transportation was difficult and was accomplished mostly by flatboat. There was a tendency for communities to become closed to outsiders. The "superior-subordinate" role referred to in Deep South (Davis et al., 1941, p. 15), prevailed in the relationship between Blacks and Whites. However, as one observes the residents of the communities today, it becomes increasingly evident that miscengenation was also prevalent. Many "marriages" took place between White men, and Black women. There is little evidence that any similar relationship between Black men and White women ever existed.



### Reconstruction Period

After the war, the Florida State Legislature, which convened in June, 1866, ratified the 14th Amendment and passed laws which safeguarded most of the Negroes' Civil Rights, but denied them the right to vote. Conditions in Putnam County, while not ideal, were not as harsh as in some other sections of Florida. Citizens who had fled from their homesites returned to rebuild damaged properties and reclaim overgrown farmlands. Large numbers of newly freed Blacks roamed the countryside. They were not able to make a living and this further added to the burden of the already impoverished Whites who were trying to rehabilitate themselves. Many did return as employees of their former masters although they were free. Others chose to live the life of "gypsies," wandering the area and taking food wherever they could find it.

The Reconstruction period over all of Florida was darkened by suffering and poverty, though it was not characterized by the harshness experienced in many other Southern states. An immediate adjustment was made between the planters and the newly formed Freedmen's Bureau so that by late 1866, nine-tenths of Florida's Blacks were working in the fields. A few Blacks in Putnam County (meaning Palatka) were elected to public office under the "carpetbag regime" (Wallace, 1964, p. 188).

The story is told of one Black who was elected to public office in Palatka, a Judge by the name of Dennis Wood. Wood



was a former slave of Colonel Hart. On a particularly hot day, the Colonel appeared in court to hear a case in which he was interested (his daughter was in court after being arrested for drunk and disorderly conduct). There was a water pitcher on the Judge's desk, but when the Colonel got up to get a drink the pitcher was empty. When he called for Dennis to fill it, the Judge immediately jumped up from his chair, filled the water pitcher, and said, "here's some water, master. I'se sorry to kept you waitin' so long." Judge Wood presided over the county court for several years.

E.M. Doyle, another Black, was town marshal of Palatka. He had a large force of Black policemen, of whom it is said found little necessity for arresting any White people, but were continually engaged in an effort to bring in law-breakers of their own race.

I.L. Purcell, a Black lawyer, had an extensive practice in the county. It is said that he was a powerful advocate at the bar and he lost very few cases. It is also said that he fixed up many a case for clients, both Black and White.

About 1870, Florida experienced a period of lawlessness, particularly in the turpentine and citrus sections of Central Florida. The Ku Klux Klan was unusually active in these areas. Blacks in west Putnam County were reluctant to exercise the franchise and were encouraged to remain away from the polls. The major disturbances, however, seemed to subside by 1871. The Klan kept up its activities in west

Putnam and kept all Blacks away from the polls for fear of their lives. This fear carried over to future generations and only abated after the disturbances of the late 60's and early 70's. As late as 1974, there were few Blacks voting in the Johnson's Crossing Community.

In 1876, the Klan completed its objective by electing a total slate of Whites. Since then, no major public office has been held by a Black person in Putnam County. However, Dr. D.M. Kirby, a White Republican, did appoint a Black Deputy Clerk of the County Court after he was elected to office.

#### Economic Growth

In 1868, the railroad companies launched extensive programs of land development in Central Florida, especially featuring the profits of the citrus industry. As a result, a citrus boom came to Central and Northeast Florida until the big freeze of the 1890's. During the 1870's, the citrus industry was the biggest contributor of the economy of Putnam County. From the Interlachen area, east to Palatka, Blacks were brought in to help harvest the crops. This resulted in the establishment of communities like "Whitesville" which is a part of the Johnson's Crossing Community. This was an area set aside for Blacks and was so named because of the habit of the residents "whitewashing" the exterior of their homes.

Related to the citrus industry was the coming of the railroads to this part of Florida. The first railroad was established in 1884. It was the Palatka, Gainesville, and Charlotte Harbor Railroad. It later became the Florida Southern and is still known by that name as a branch of the Atlantic Coast Line. The second railroad in this area was the Georgia Southern and Florida Railroad which was chartered in Macon, Georgia, in 1885. Construction did not begin on this line, however, until 1887. The line ran from Palatka to Macon, a distance of 285 miles.

With the expansion of the citrus industry and the experimenting with different kinds of crops, little thought was given to the weather factor. In January, 1886, a hard freeze struck the Palatka area and did extensive damage to the citrus crops. However, the growers did recover. The worst was yet to come. On December 28, 1894, another cold wave struck. The trees were heavily damaged but not destroyed. Early in 1895, another cold wave hit the area and all but devastated the whole industry. As a result, the growers in years to follow began to shift the location of the citrus industry from North Central Florida to Central and South Florida. Today the citrus industry is no longer a major factor in the economy of Putnam County.

In 1902, the economic conditions of west Putnam, namely Johnson's Crossing, Edgar, McMeekin, and Johnsons, were greatly improved. This is when Kaolin deposits were discovered in the area. The Kaolin mines, referred to as the sand mines

by the local residents, were sources of livelihood for many of the men, both Black and White, in the immediate area of Johnsons and Edgar. Until late in the 1930's, the mines produced an average of 50,000 tons of clay per year. The clay was shipped to Northern and Eastern markets for making fine porcelain, enamels for tubs, glassware, sparkling insulators, face creams, powders, and soaps. The mines are still producing today although not on such a large scale as was seen in the early history of the county. Several of the men of Johnson's Crossing are still employed at the Kaolin mines. This is the only industry in the immediate vicinity of Johnson's Crossing. In order to secure work, the residents have to travel to either Palatka or Alachua County. The researcher was told by the residents that only a few people from Johnson's Crossing get hired in Palatka. It seems that Alachua County is more liberal in its hiring policies towards Black people in this community. In checking with the current residents, they can only remember two Blacks who were employed at the pulp mills in Palatka, and both of them have long been retired. There was never any large scale farming in Johnson's Crossing area, just enough to take care of the family. The easiest place for the Blacks in Johnson's Crossing to get work was in Gainesville, even though obstacles had to be overcome in this city as well.

As the University of Florida began to grow, Blacks were given more opportunities for employment in Alachua County. Although they had to be off the school grounds

before nightfall, the jobs as cooks, dining hall personnel, custodial helpers, and all-around handy men were open to many of them. Today, as then, the residents of Johnson's Crossing still look to the University for employment.

Many of the young people who have no desire to leave their homes in Johnson's Crossing actively seek employment at the University as soon as they leave high school.

APPENDIX B  
COMMUNITY STUDY, 1978

The University of Florida  
Department of Sociology  
Gainesville, Florida

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location No. \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

(This is a survey sponsored by the University of Florida. If you feel that certain questions are too personal, just say so. Your rights to privacy will be respected. This information will be used in a study about, and a history of, this community.)

Sex  
Circle one

I. Head of Household \_\_\_\_\_ M F  
(Last) (First) (M.I.)

II. Name of Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ M F  
(Last) (First) (M.I.)

III. Marital Status (Check one)

- 1. Now married \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Widowed \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Divorced \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Separated \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Never married \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Grade Completed (Circle One)

<u>Elementary</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>Trade School</u>
1 2 3 4 5 6	7 8 9 10 11 12	1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2

V. Children Living in Household:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (age) (School attending) (Grade)



## V. Children Living in Household (Cont.):

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) (age) (School attending) (Grade)
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) (age) (School attending) (Grade)
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) (age) (School attending) (Grade)
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) (age) (School attending) (Grade)
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) (age) (School attending) (Grade)

## VI. Other Persons Living in Household:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) (Relationship to Head of Household)
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) (Relationship to Head of Household)
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name) (Relationship to Head of Household)

VII. Own your Home \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_ renting \_\_\_\_ buying

VIII. How long have you lived in this Community? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (years)

IX. Where did you live before coming here?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (City or Township) (State)

X. Why did you move here? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

XI. Have you lived away from here? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

XII. How long? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (years)

XIII. Were you born in this County? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

XIV. Were you born in this Community? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

XV. Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_  
(City or Town) (State)

XVI. Were your parents born in this Community? \_\_ yes \_\_ no

XVII. If not, Where: Father \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother \_\_\_\_\_

XVIII. Did/Do your Parents own land in this Community?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

XIX. Did/Does your Spouse own land in this Community?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

XX. (Check appropriate blank)

A. Construction of house: \_\_\_\_ Brick \_\_\_\_ Frame  
\_\_\_\_ Mobile Unit

B. Outer Appearance: \_\_\_\_ Painted \_\_\_\_ Unpainted

C. Utilities: \_\_\_\_ Running water \_\_\_\_ Lighting Fixtures  
\_\_\_\_ Gas \_\_\_\_ Oil Lamps \_\_\_\_ Oil Heat

D. Refrigerator \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

E. Washing Machine \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

F. Telephone \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

G. Television \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

H. Automobile \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No



- (C) Are there persons in your household under 21 years of age, who receive AFDC? ☐ Yes ☐ No.  
If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_.
- VII. (A) Have you been examined by selective service?  
☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, what year 19 \_\_\_\_.
- (B) Have you been rejected by Selective Service?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
- (C) Do you receive pension or disability benefits from any branch of service? ☐ Yes ☐ No.  
What kind of benefits? \_\_\_\_\_

### Religion

- I. Are you a member of an organized church? ☐ Yes ☐ No.  
How long have you been a member? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)  
How often do you attend your church? (check one)  
☐ more than once a week  
☐ every Sunday  
☐ at least once a month  
☐ only on special occasions
- II. Of the churches in this community, which do you frequent most often? \_\_\_\_\_
- III. Does your spouse attend church as a member? ☐ Yes ☐ No.  
If the answer to the above is yes, which is the other church you most often frequent? \_\_\_\_\_.  
How often? \_\_\_\_\_.
- IV. Which church do the children attend? \_\_\_\_\_.
- V. If there are other house members, which church do they attend? \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Member? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
(Name) (Church)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Member? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
(Name) (Church)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Member? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
(Name) (Church)

VI. Has the church been of help to you and your family?

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Not sure. If so, in what ways?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Politics

I. Are you a registered voter in this county? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

In which district do you vote? \_\_\_\_\_

To which party do you belong? \_\_\_\_ Dem. \_\_\_\_ Rep.

\_\_\_\_ Indep. \_\_\_\_ Other

II. Do you vote in local or county elections? \_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ No response

Did you vote in the last Presidential election?

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ No response

III. Can you name three (3) persons in your community who are politically active?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

- IV. If there was one person in this community that you could approach to learn about government, politics, welfare, food stamps, social security or other aid, who would this person be? \_\_\_\_\_

When you need these kinds of social services performed for you, to which city or town do you go? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City or Township)

Do you think that your county elected officials are concerned about your welfare? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_ No response

### Education

- I. The Supreme Court decision of 1954 was supposed to change things for the better in terms of education for Black people. Have you seen any changes?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No. If yes, what changes have you observed?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

- II. The fact that there is no school in this community for Black children, do you think that this hurts the community? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No. If yes, how does it hurt?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

- III. Do you think that the old school that was in the community did a better job of educating your children?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Do you think that the White teachers are doing a better job of educating your children than Black teachers? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Just as fine a job  
\_\_\_\_ a worse job



Do the White teachers seem to show a genuine concern for your children? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Some concern  
 \_\_\_\_ Very little concern

Would you prefer your child be taught by \_\_\_\_ White teacher \_\_\_\_ Black teacher \_\_\_\_ Does not make a difference.

### General

- I. The 1960's saw a lot of problems between races. Have relationships changed in this community since the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No.

If so, how? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- II. Black people once owned quite a bit of land in this area. In your opinion, what happened to it?  
 \_\_\_\_ Blacks died out \_\_\_\_ Blacks sold it to Whites  
 voluntarily \_\_\_\_ Blacks were forced to sell to Whites  
 \_\_\_\_ Whites took it

- III. When you sought employment in other cities or towns near this area do you feel that you were given a fair chance at being hired? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No. If no, what do you think the problem was?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- IV. Do you feel that in jobs outside this Community that you discriminated against in hiring practices because of:

1. Being from a different town? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
2. Being a Black person? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
3. Employers want people who are close at hand?  
 \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

- V. Do you feel that on your job, you are given an equal opportunity at being promoted? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No. If no, why do you think this is so?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- VI. Do you feel that other Blacks who live in town are given a better chance of being hired if you're both seeking the same job? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

- VII. When "outsiders" come to your community, what is your attitude toward them?

\_\_\_\_ don't care to talk to them  
 \_\_\_\_ suspicious at first but will respond when I get to know them  
 \_\_\_\_ don't mind talking with them if they want to talk

- VIII. What do you feel is the "ideal" number of children to have? \_\_\_\_\_

- IX. If illness occurs in your family, who would you first call for assistance?

\_\_\_\_ relative  
 \_\_\_\_ friends  
 \_\_\_\_ neighbors

- X. Which statement is closest to your belief about marriage decisions?

\_\_\_\_ The husband and wife should make decisions together  
 \_\_\_\_ The husband should make the most decisions  
 \_\_\_\_ The wife should make the most decisions  
 \_\_\_\_ The husband should make some decisions and the wife should make others  
 \_\_\_\_ If opinions differ, the husband should have the final decision  
 \_\_\_\_ If opinions differ, the wife should make the final decision

- XI. If a young person finished high school and wants to get married, comes to you for advice on where to live, what would you recommend? \_\_\_\_\_ Remain in the Community.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

Leave the Community. Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- XII. What advice would you give your own children concerning their living here as opposed to somewhere else?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- XIII. What factors do you consider important in keeping this Community together?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Families and/or \_\_\_\_\_ ties to the land
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Jobs in the area and/or \_\_\_\_\_ chances for growth.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Educational opportunities locally and/or \_\_\_\_\_ Colleges nearby.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Community organization and/or \_\_\_\_\_ governmental structure in the County.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Churches and religious duties and feelings.

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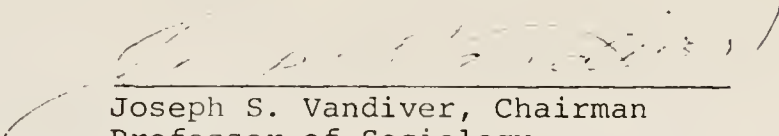
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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William J. Simmons was born in Orlando, Florida, March 26, 1937. He graduated from Jones High School and attended Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina, where he received the B.S. degree in elementary education. He later attended Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, and in 1964 received the M.S. degree. Before pursuing further study, he was the Principal of Hopkins High School in Hopkins, South Carolina, and a guidance counselor in the Palm Beach County School System of Florida. He entered the Ph.D. program in sociology at the University of Florida in the fall of 1972 with African studies, minorities, and family, as his major areas of concentration. While at the University of Florida, he became the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Director of the Institute of Black Culture, a position he has held since 1975.



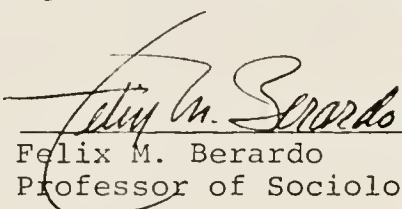
I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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Joseph S. Vandiver, Chairman  
Professor of Sociology

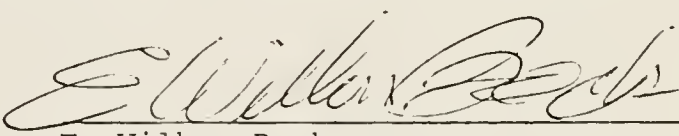
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Felix M. Berardo  
Professor of Sociology

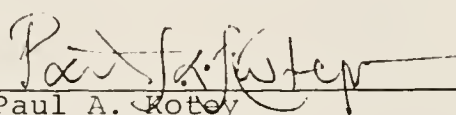
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E. Wilbur Bock  
Professor of Sociology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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Paul A. Kotey  
Associate Professor of  
Linguistics



I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

  
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Gerald R. Leslie  
Professor of Sociology

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Sociology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August, 1981

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Dean for Graduate Studies and  
Research

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



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